

MODERN

COMICS

SEPTEMBER
No. 77

10¢

BLACKHAWK
battles
The BEAST MEN!





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

YOUR SAVINGS MOUNT UP LIKE MAGIC
BECAUSE YOU

Make Money With Your Own

JUKE BOX BANK

A Real Money-Maker
For You . . . Because

FRIENDS AND RELATIVES WILL HELP
YOU SAVE, JUST TO SEE HOW IT WORKS!

You'll see those nickels and dimes rapidly add up to mighty dollar bills with this new Juke Box Bank that's a gay plastic reproduction of the tuneful Juke Box down at the corner soda fountain. Bring it out at parties or when company comes to call. The coins and currency will really pour in, because **everyone** wants to see it light up electrically and flash its bit of advice: "It's Wise to Be Thrifty"—to which we might add: it's **easy** to be thrifty when you have an attention-getting, fun-producing Juke Box Bank.

SEND NO MONEY: send only your name and address. Then pay postman only \$1.98 plus postage. Or send cash and we pay postage. If you are not delighted, return within 10 days for speedy, cheerful refund.



\$1.98
Post Paid
Complete With
Battery & Bulb

Put Your Coins in
Slot and Press-In!

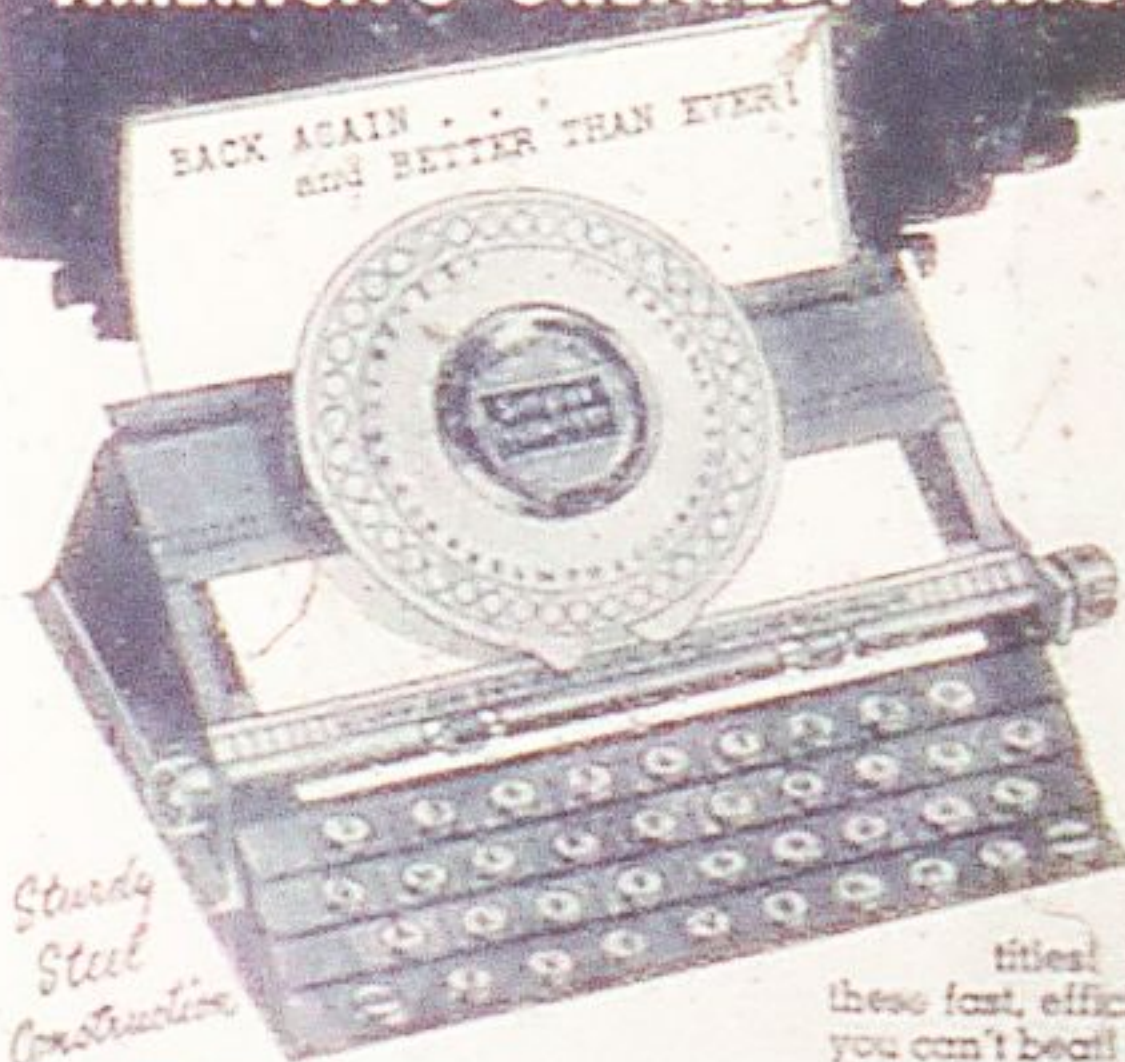
**JUKE BOX
BLAZES WITH LIGHT
AS IT FLASHES:**

It's Wise to Be Thrifty

AMERICAN MERCHANDISING COMPANY, 9 Madison Avenue, Montgomery 4, Ala. Dept. JB-63

AMERICA'S GREATEST JUNIOR TYPEWRITER VALUE!

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PERFECT FOR SCHOOL WORK...

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Hey Kids! . . . like to make a big hit with teachers and get better grades in school? It's easy when you turn in neat, accurately typed papers. Don't delay a moment longer! Order your Simplex Portable Typewriter **today** and find out how much fun it is to do your homework the easy, time-saving way!



AMERICAN MERCHANDISING COMPANY, 9 Madison Avenue, Montgomery 4, Ala. Dept. ST-63

Blackhawk



From every land have come the heroes who make up the brotherhood of The BLACKHAWKS... but in courage, loyalty and service to civilization - they are as one!

Fearlessly they tackled the baleful mystery of what happened to a family of brilliant scientists....

Let Blackhawk himself tell what happened....

WELL, I'LL BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING, BEFORE WE KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT IT!



The Martek Brothers... four brilliant scientists... had long conducted secret experiments toward a new source of mechanical power, and...

ALL THE TESTS CHECK! WE'RE PAST FIGURING AND PUZZLING! WE CAN START REAL PRACTICAL WORK!

AMEN, LUKE! BUT WHERE—ASIA, AFRICA OR HERE IN AMERICA?



SUPPOSE I CARRY ON AT OUR HOME WORKSHOP! AVERY CAN LOCATE IN THE GOBI DESERT, WINSTON IN THE SAHARA, AND YOU...

I STILL THINK MY NOTION ABOUT THE VOLCANO COUNTRY IN THE ANDES IS GOOD, LUKE!



JUST AS YOU SAY, GANT! HEAD FOR THE PLACE YOU EXPLORED, AND SET UP THE MACHINERY! ONE OF US FOUR WILL SUCCEED, AND THE WORLD WILL KNOW!

RIGHT, LUKE! ONE OF US WILL SUCCEED! I'M CONFIDENT OF THAT!



SO THEY WENT TO FOUR REMOTE REGIONS TO TEST THEIR FINDINGS! AS YET THEY WERE WAITING, THOSE BRILLIANT BROTHERS, FOR COMPLETE TRIUMPH—BEFORE GIVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE TO THE WORLD!

OUI, VRAIMENT! ZAT WAS WHEN OLAF AND I WERE ON PATROL—CRUISING OVER ZE DESERT OF GOBI, IN ASIA!



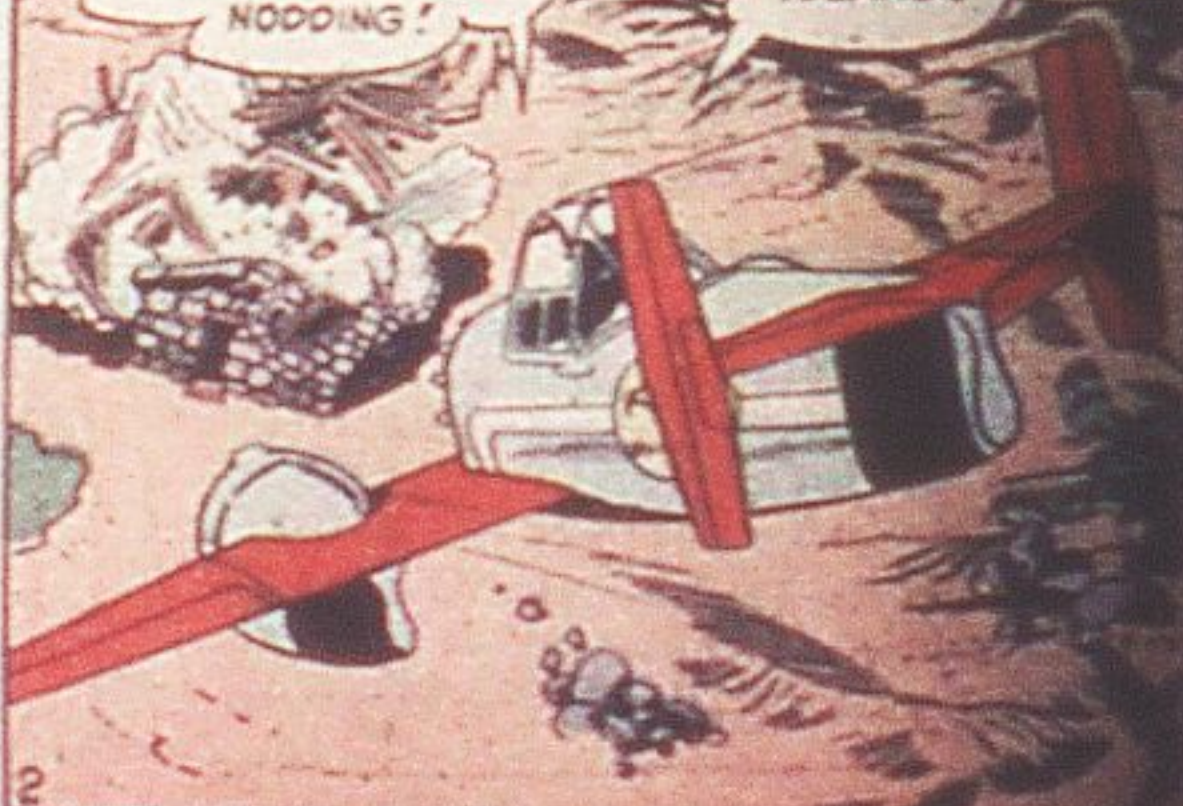
As Andre says, we were making patrols in far places—watching for violations of law and order...

ZUT ALORS, OLAF! MY RAY-FINDING RECEIVER—IT BRINGS A RADIOACTIVE MURDER FROM ZE VALLEY YONDER! WE MAKE ZE SCOUT, YES?



BY YUPITER, ANDRE! DAS STONE HOUSE BAN BLOW UP TO NODDING!

WE LAND—INVESTIGATE AND RADIO BLACKHAWK ISLAND!



At the island headquarters of the Blackhawks

MESSAGE FROM ANDRE AND OLAF, EH? WHAT IS IT, CHUCK?

MYSTERIOUS BLAST IN THE GOBI DESERT ... WRECKED MACHINERY, DEAD MAN ... NOTEBOOK WITH THE NAME AVERY MARTEK!

AVERY MARTEK! ONE OF THE MARTEK FAMILY OF SCIENTISTS ... LUKE, THE ELDEST, ONCE TOLD ME IN CONFIDENCE THEY WERE ON THE VERGE OF A GREAT DISCOVERY!

LOOKEE-LISTEN! CHUCK GETTEE NEW RADIO MESSAGE ... FROM STANISLAUS AND HENDRICKSON!

In the trackless Sahara ...

CALLING BLACKHAWK ISLAND! DESE STRANGE RAYS HAF LED US TO A STUCCO BUILDING ... UND DERE IT BLOWS TO LIDDLE BITS! VE ARE GOING TO LAND UND SEE!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN AN INTRICATE MACHINE, HENDRICKSON! SMASHED TO BITS NOW ... LIKE THAT POOR FELLOW!

JA, HE ISS DEAD! BUT IN HIS POCKET I FIND A LETTER WITH DER NAME WINSTON MARTEK ON IT! GET BACK ON DER RADIO ... TELL BLACKHAWK!

HERE, BLACKHAWK! ANOTHER OF THE MARTEK BROTHERS DEAD ... A BLAST IN THE SAHARA!

THEIR GREAT DISCOVERY SEEMS TO BE TOO GREAT! THEY DIE AS THEY PERFECT IT! LET ME AT THAT RADIO!

CALLING ALL BLACKHAWKS! HEAD BACK ... RENDEZVOUS WITH THE REST OF US AS WE TAKE OFF! WE'RE HOPPING THE OCEAN TO AMERICA!

Later...

HOW ABOUT BRIEFING US, BLACKHAWK? WHO ARE ZE MARTEKS? WHAT IS ZIS TRAGIC SCIENTIFIC STUDY ZEY MAKE?

LUKE MARTEK SAYS THAT THEIR FATHER BEGAN IT AND PASSED IT ON TO THEM—A PLAN TO TAP THE INNER FIRES OF THE EARTH AND GIVE PROFITABLE POWER PLANTS TO ALL THE EARTH!



THEY MUST HAVE FIGURED SOMETHING WRONG—TO BE KILLED JUST AS THEY PERFECT THE POWER! WE'LL HEAD FOR LUKE MARTEK'S WORKSHOP IN THE ARIZONA DESERT!

ROGAIN!



Soon, in Arizona...

CALLING LUKE MARTEK! THIS IS BLACKHAWK! I'M COMING IN TO VISIT YOU!

I WONDER WHAT HE WANTS? FIRST I'LL GET THE POWER GOING—THEN GO OUT AND WELCOME HIM AS THE MACHINERY WARMS UP!




BLACKHAWK! THIS IS AN HONOR! A HAPPY MOMENT FOR ME!

NOT REALLY HAPPY, I FEAR! I HAVE TRAGIC NEWS—YOUR BROTHERS AVERY AND WINSTON HAVE BEEN KILLED IN EXPLOSIONS!



I CAME TO WARN YOU AND YOUR BROTHER GANT—UNLESS HE'S DEAD ALREADY!

NO! GANT WAS HEADED FOR THE FIRE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY IN SOUTH AMERICA—HE WON'T HAVE STARTED WORKING YET! BUT YOU SAY EXPLOSIONS?



YES! THEIR BUILDINGS BLEW TO BITS! SOMETHING MUST HAVE GONE WRONG!

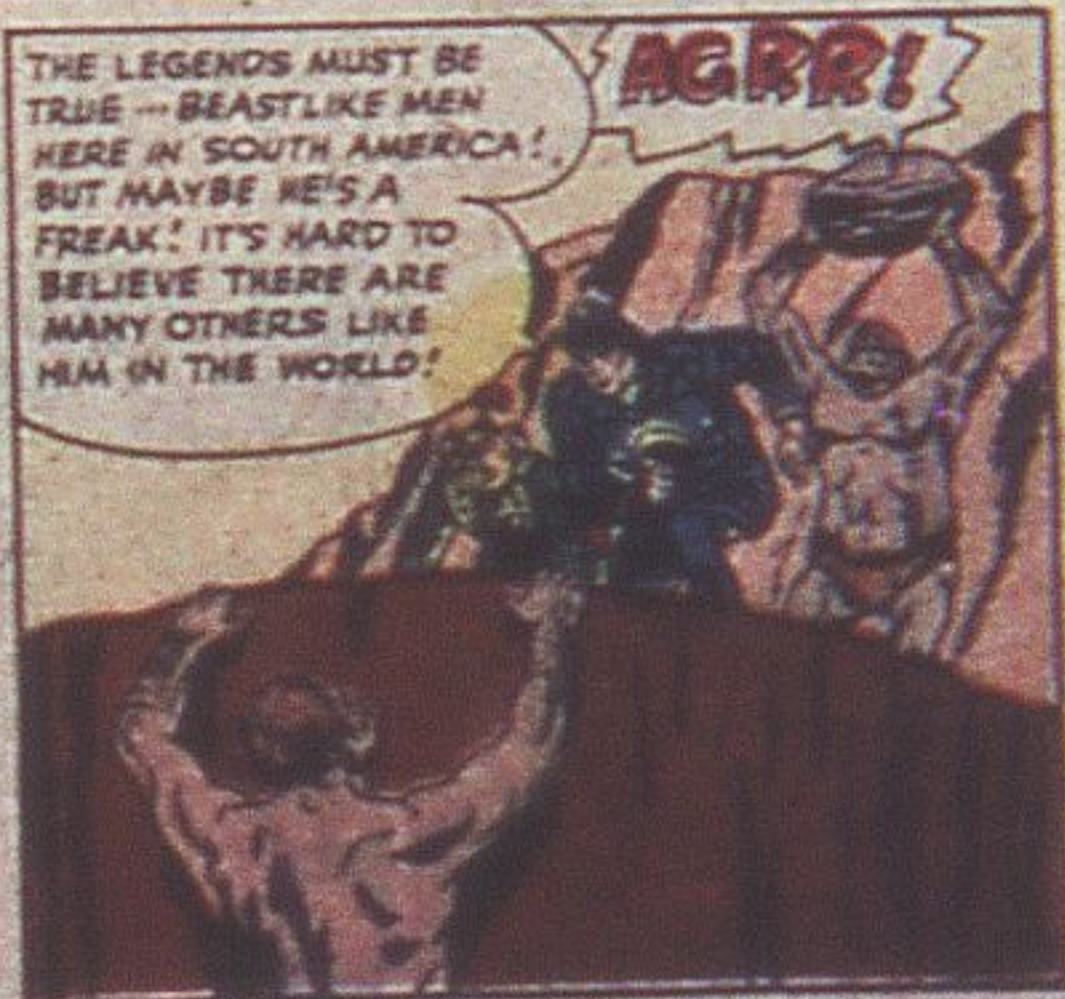
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! ALL THE MACHINERY WAS CHECKED! IF IT BLEW UP, THAT MEANS SABOTAGE!



I KNOW WHO—TO THINK I TRUSTED HIM! QUICK—I MUST TURN OFF THE POWER BEFORE...

COME BACK, LUKE! YOU MAY BE KILLED IF YOU GO IN THERE!

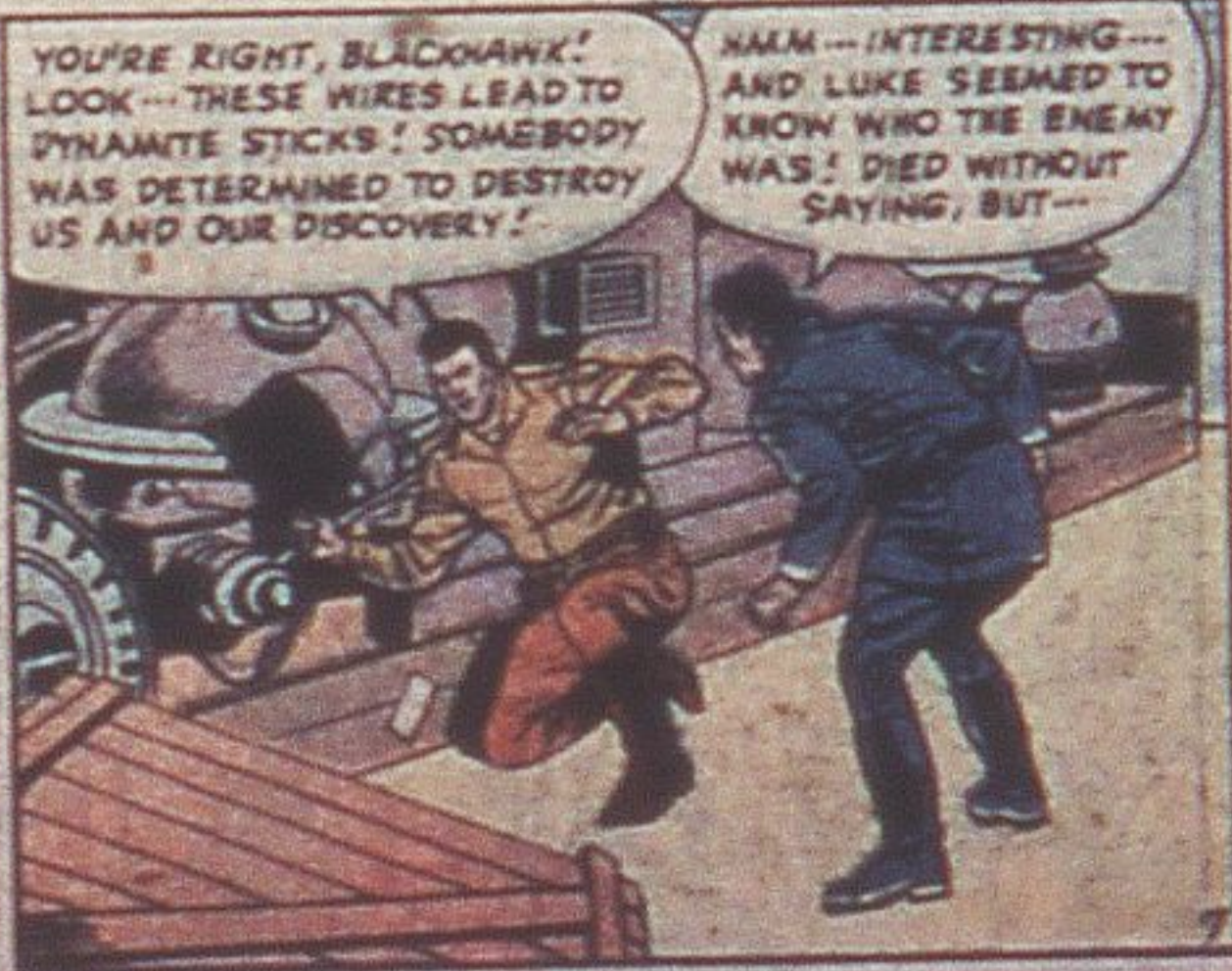


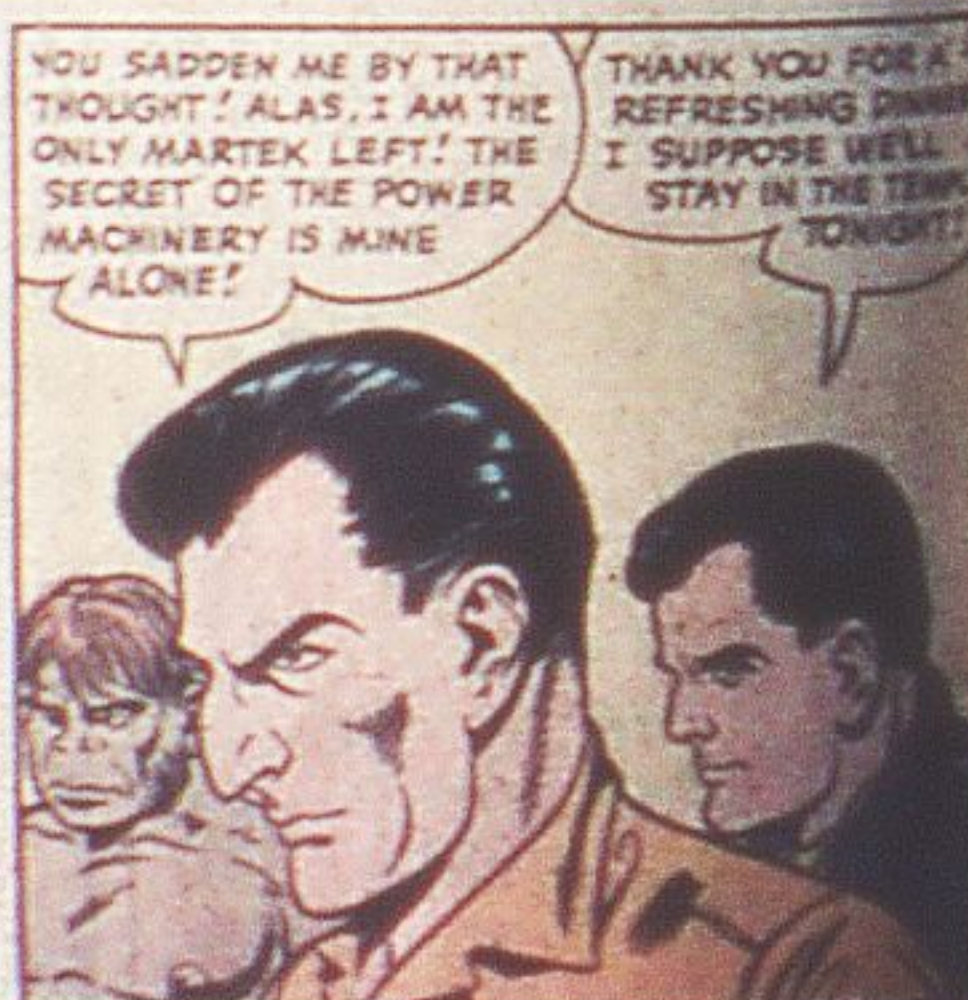
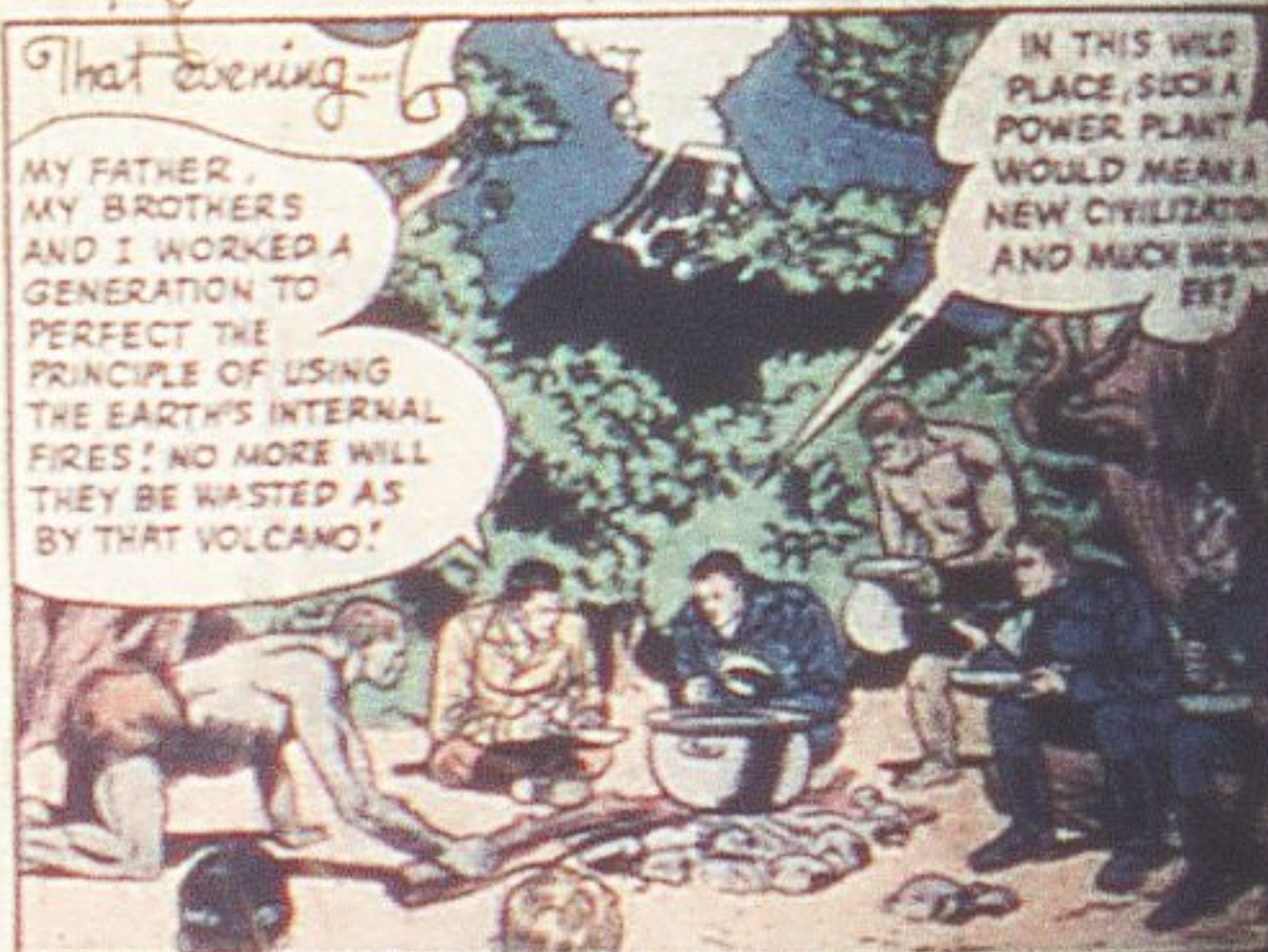
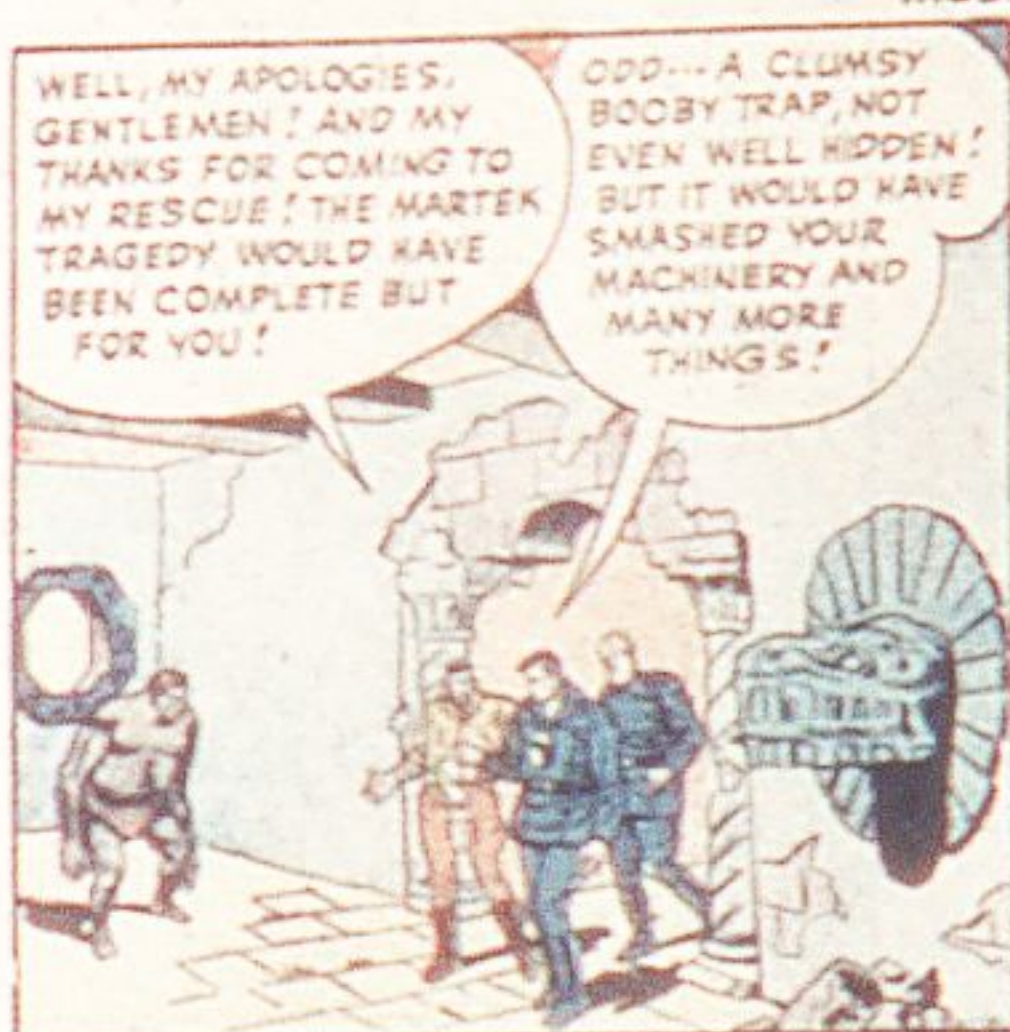


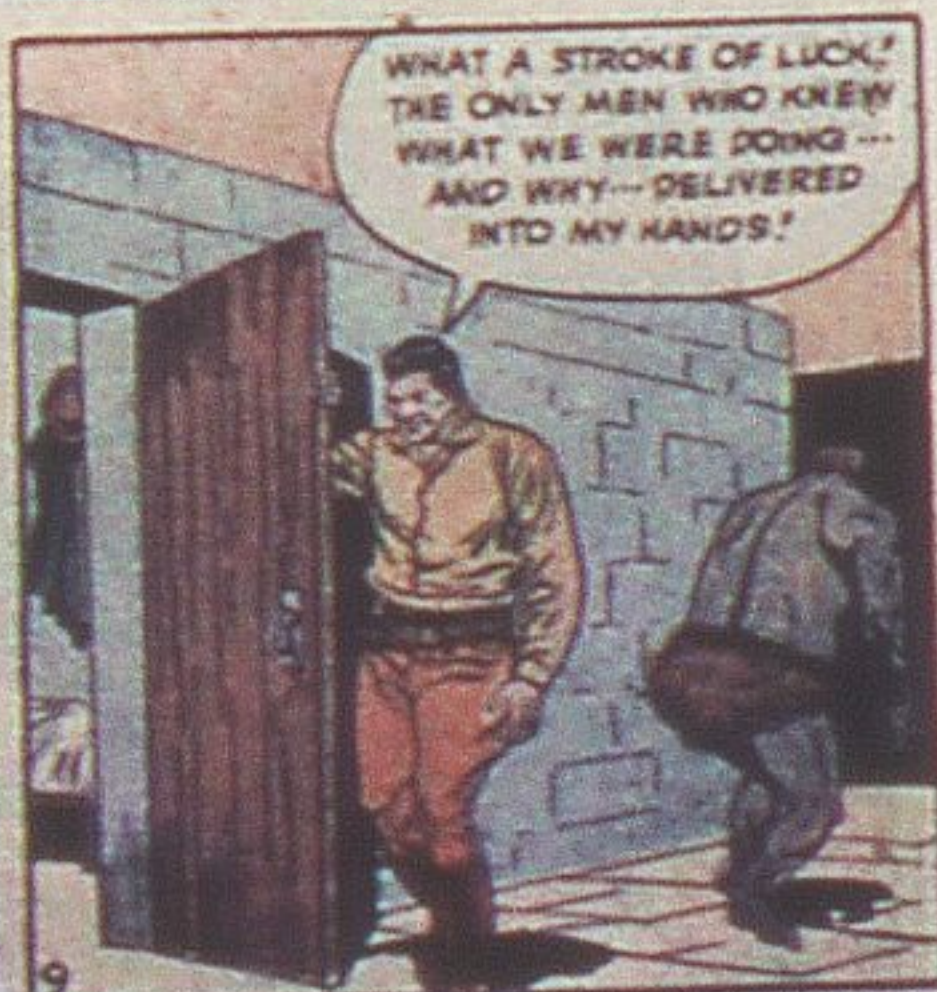
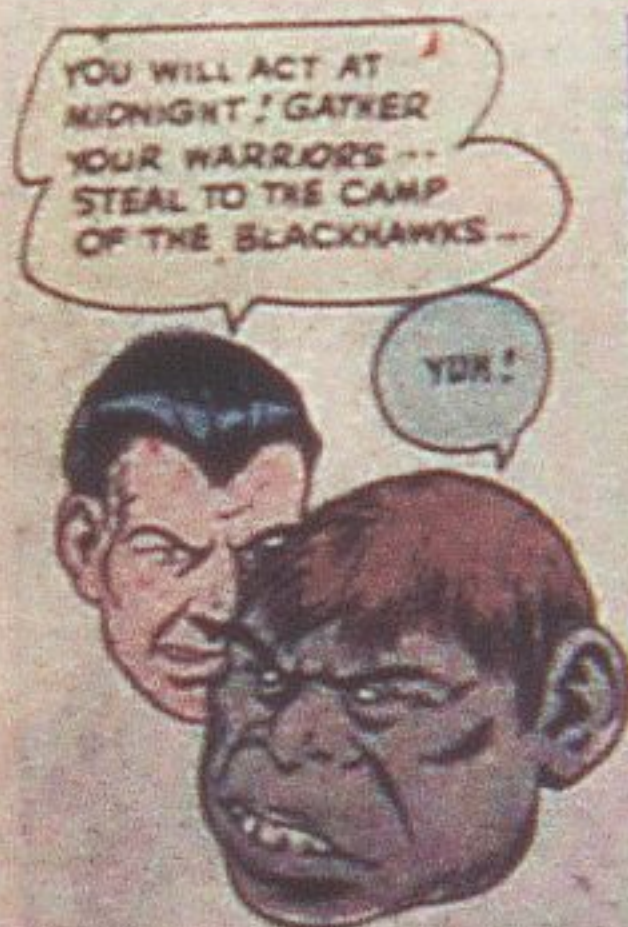


Grimly the beast-men attack, but their adversaries are the mightiest team of hand-to-hand fighters in history...

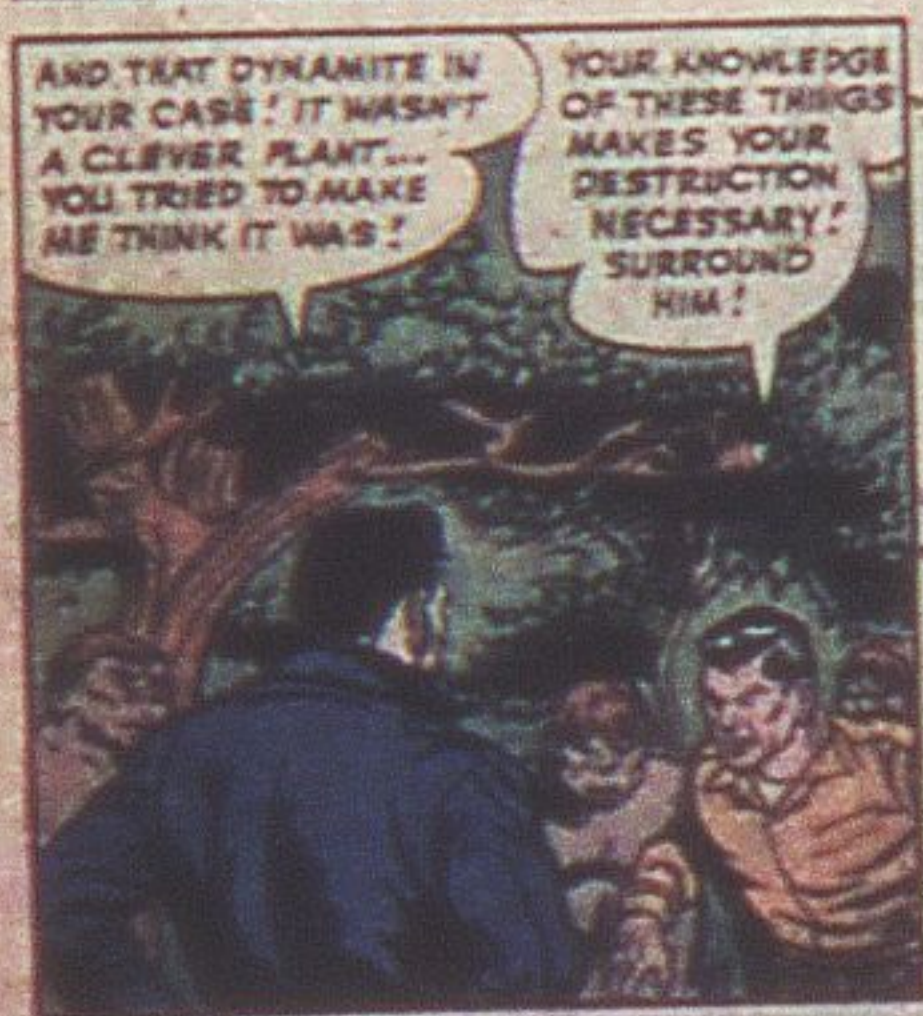
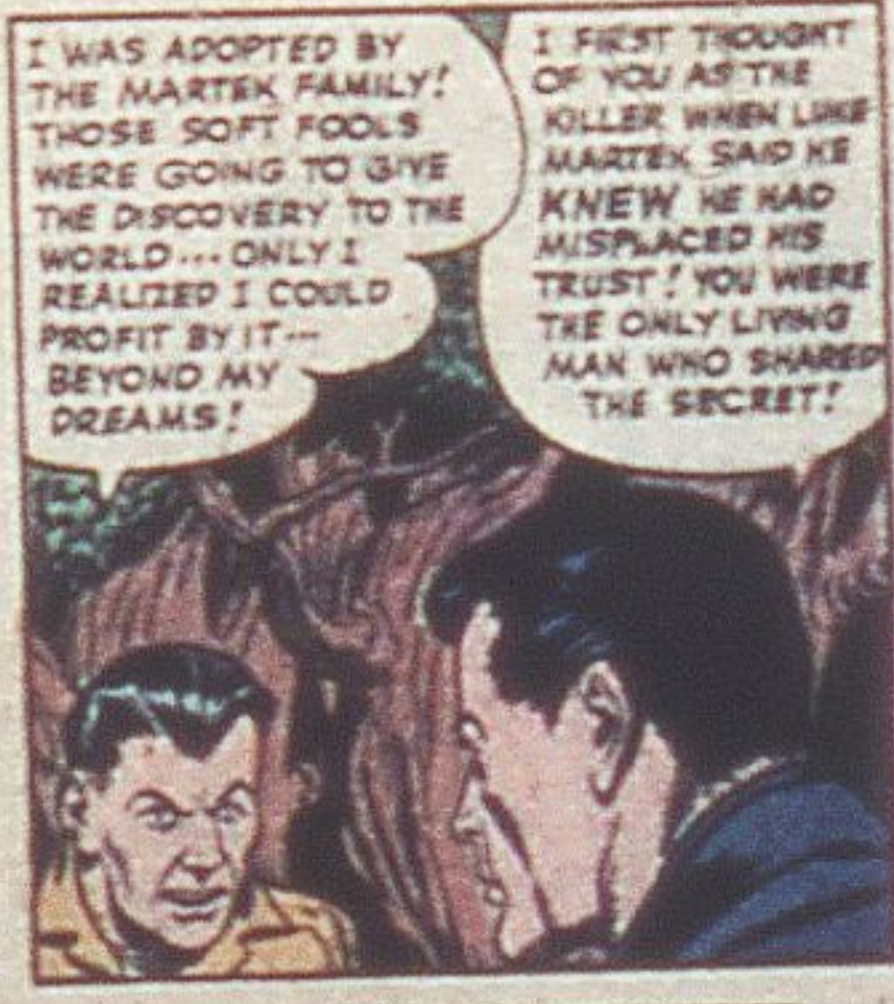








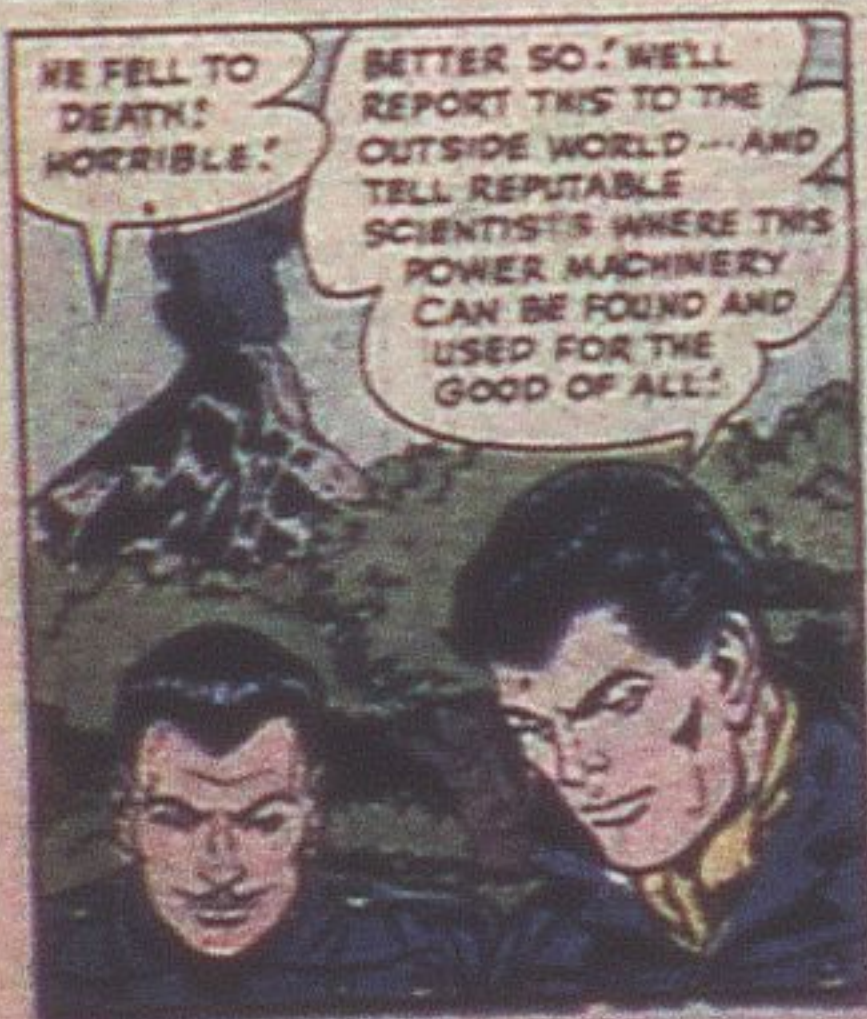
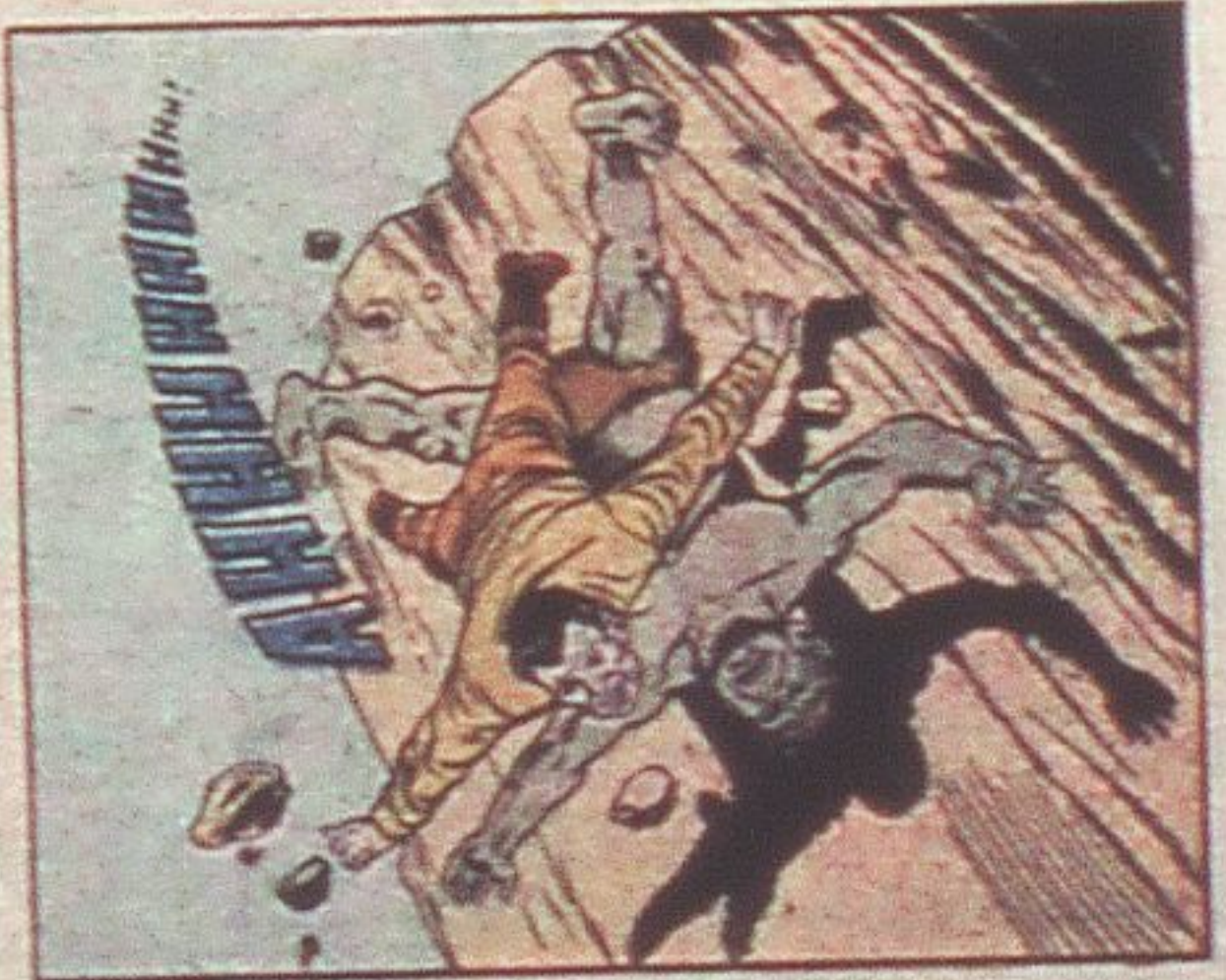




HAWKAAAA!

FIGHT!
FIGHT!

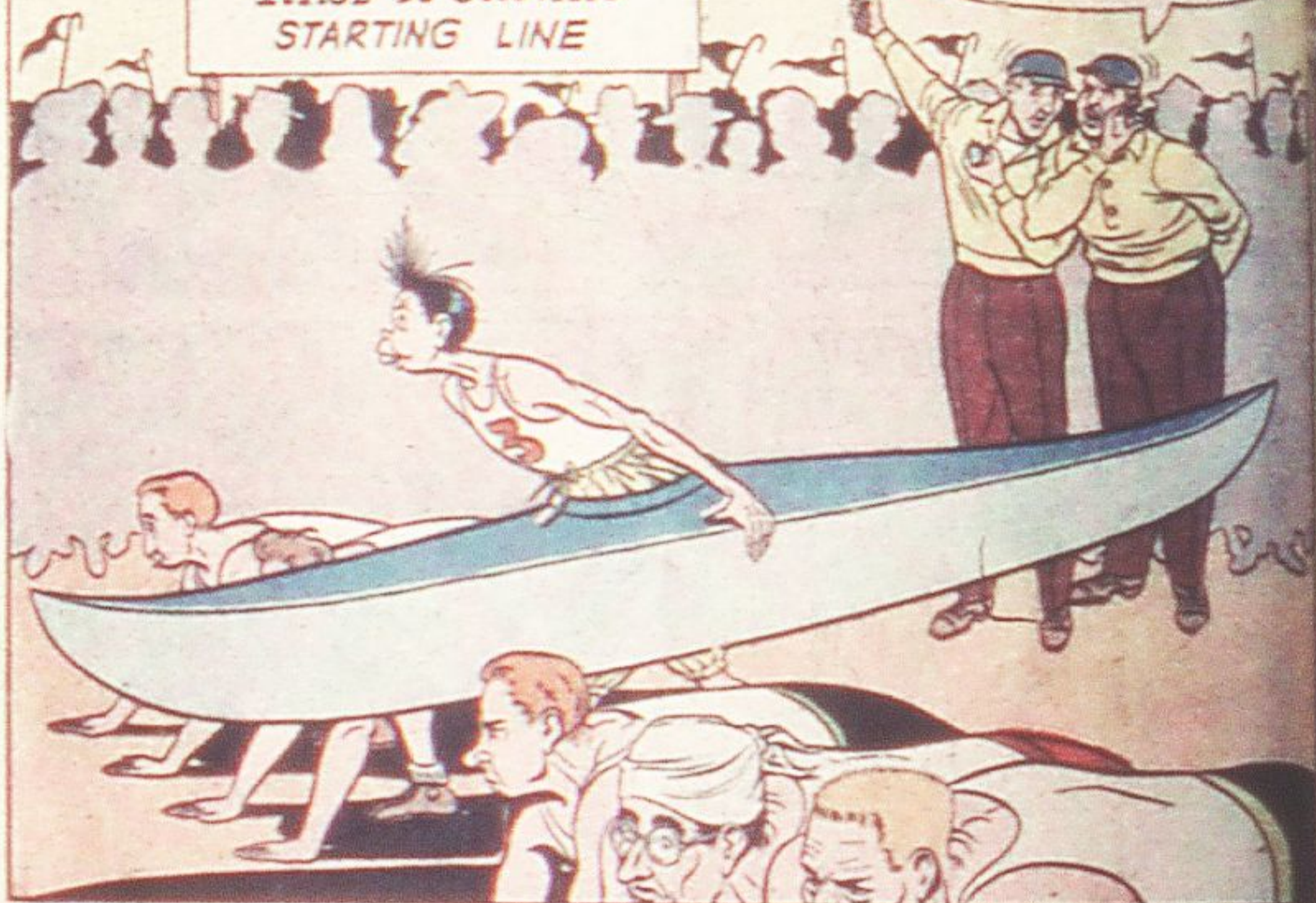




DOGTAG

ANNUAL TWENTY-MILE
RACE to Coleville
STARTING LINE

KEEP YOUR EYE ON
NUMBER THREE! I THINK
HE KNOWS A SHORT-CUT!



MIGOSH! A HUNDRED BUCKS FOR
RUNNING TWENTY MILES? I NEVER
WOULD MAKE IT. BUT A
HUNDRED
BUCKS...

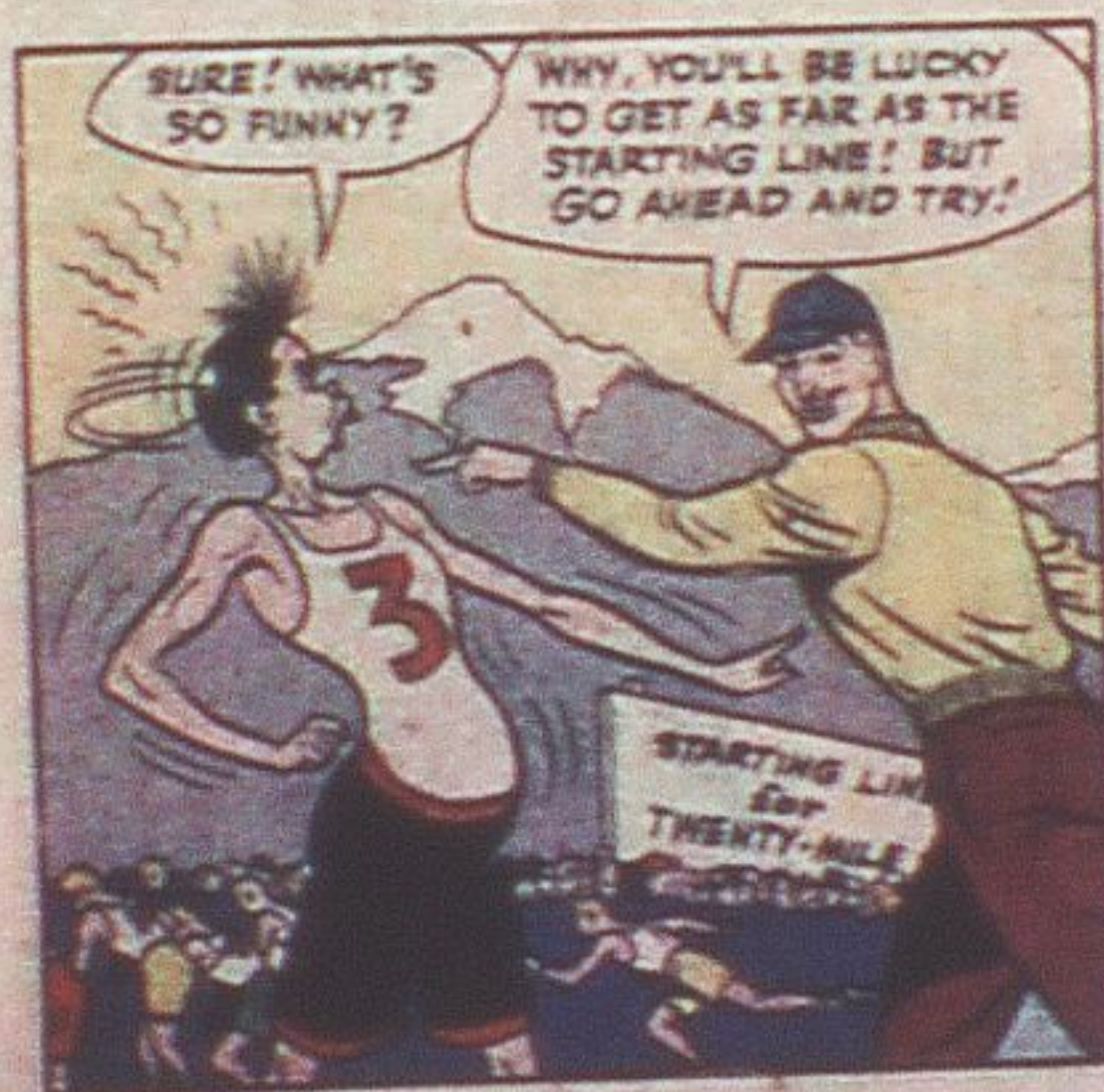
SPORTING
GOODS

Annual
TWENTY-MILE
RACE
to
COLEVILLE
FIRST
PRIZE
\$100
Fill Out
entries
— here —

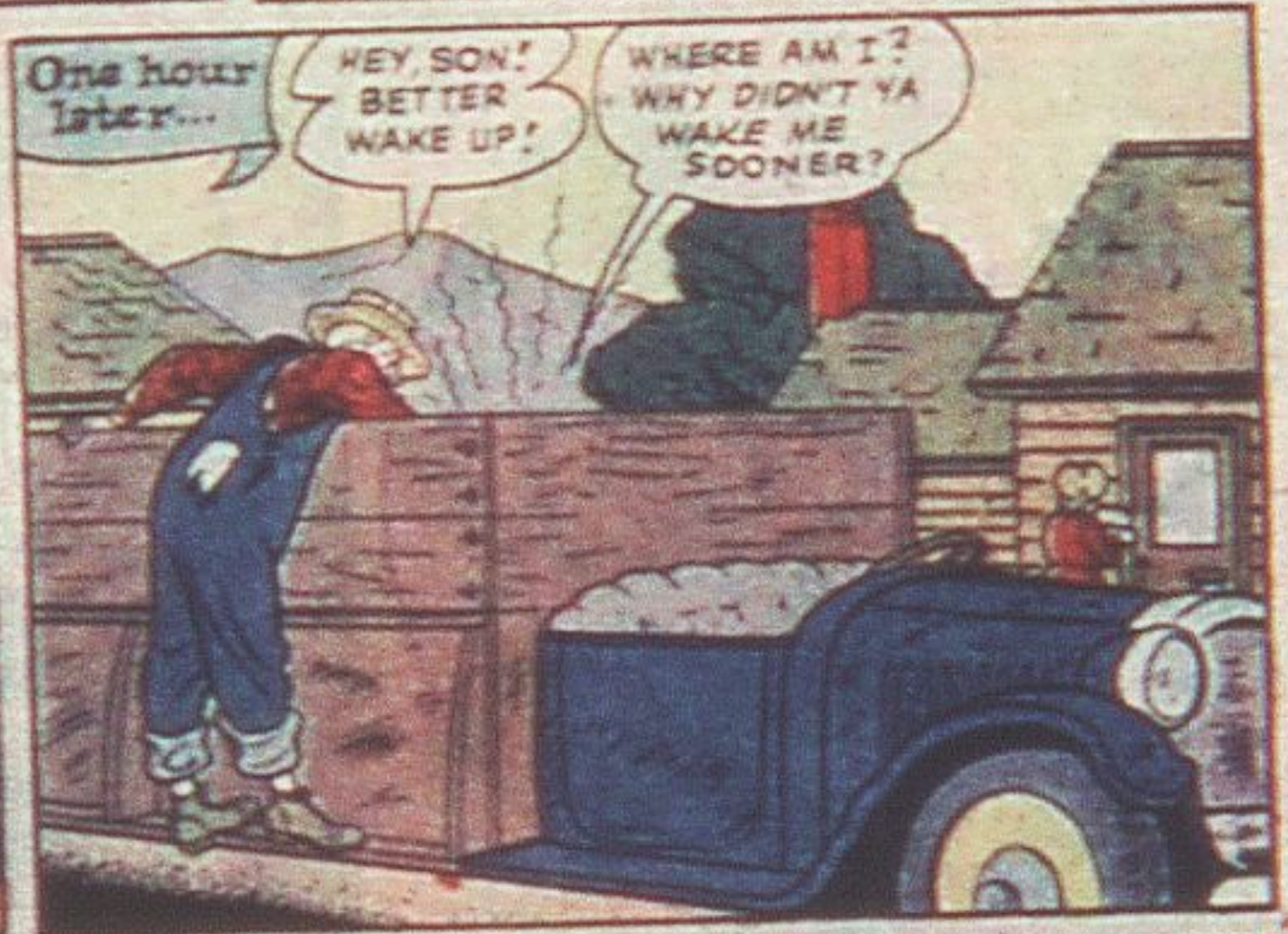
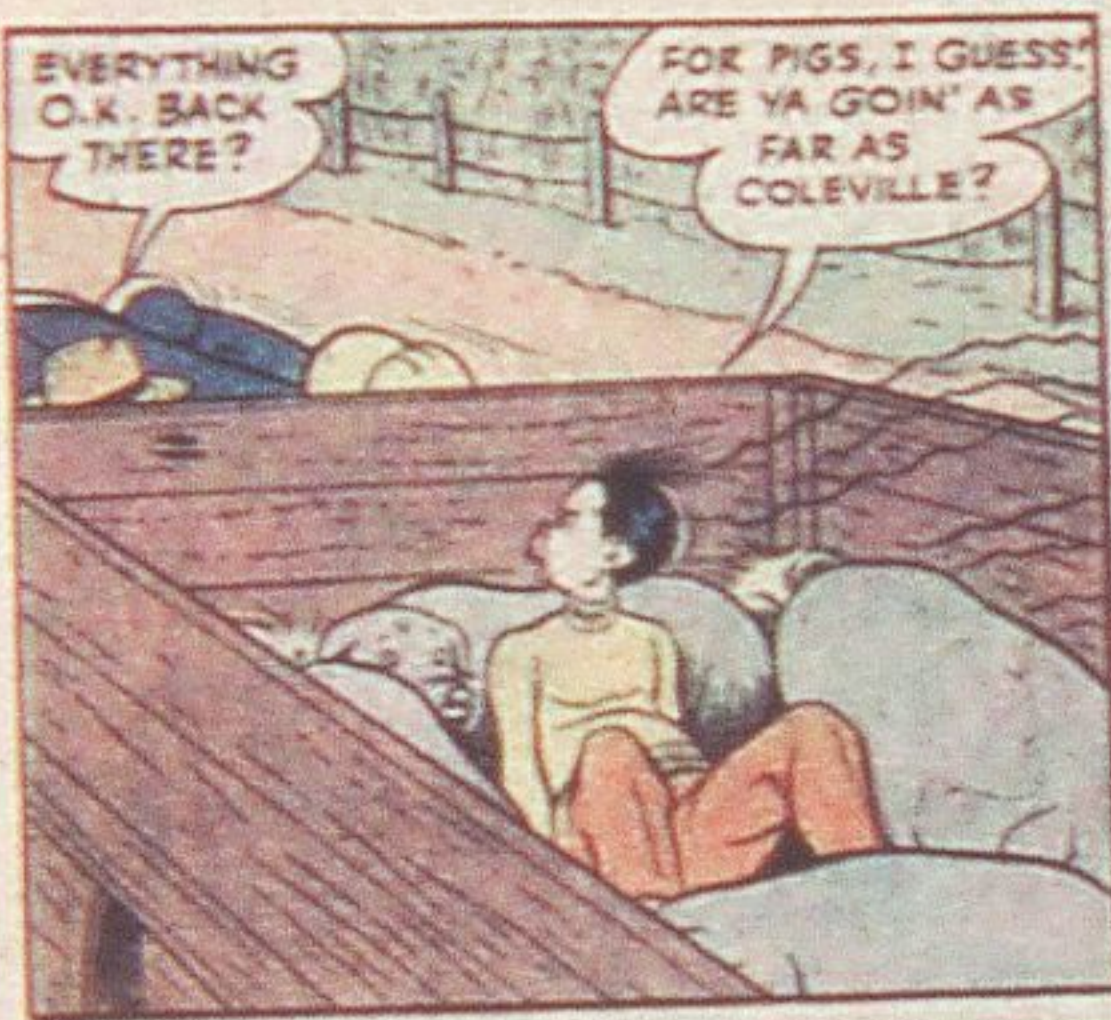
BRIGHT
IDEA!

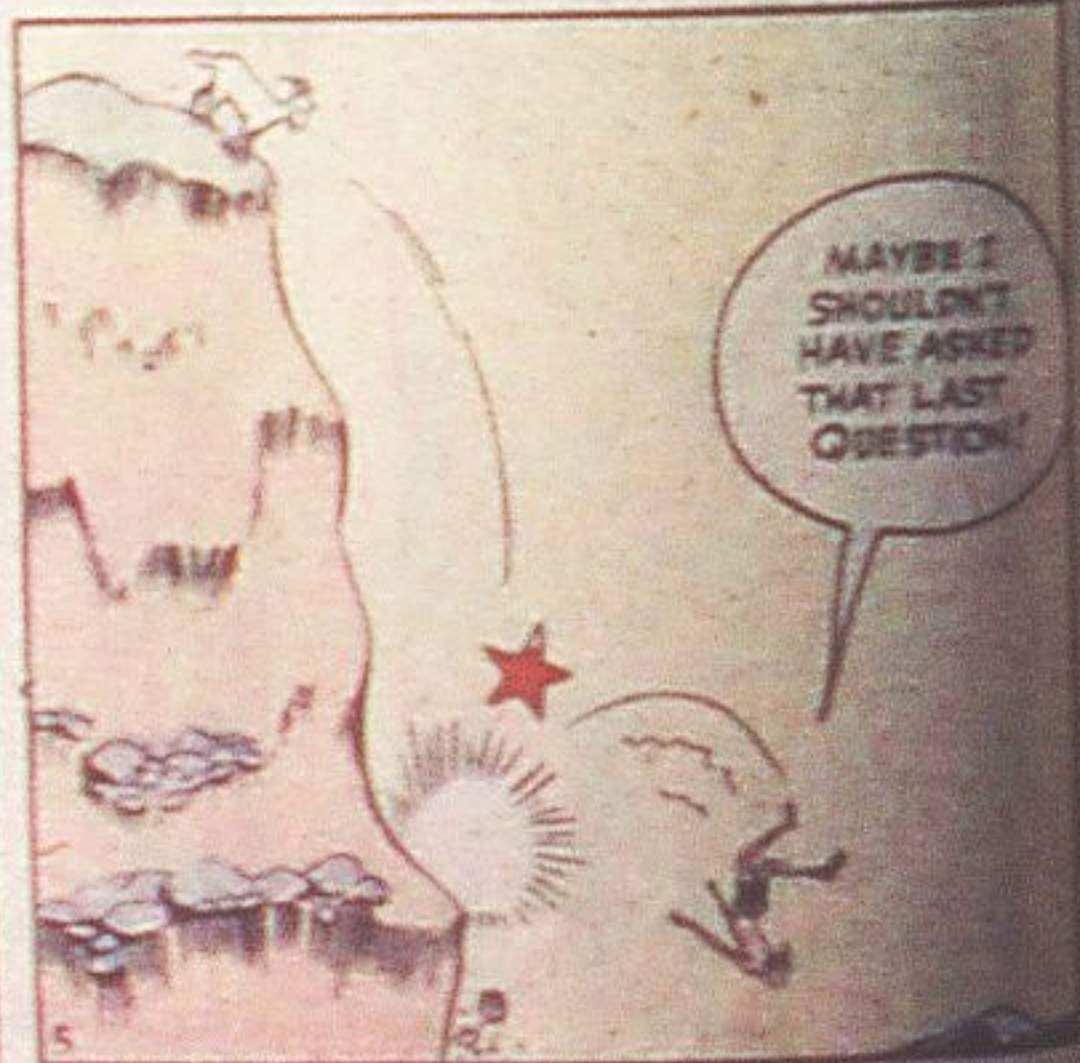
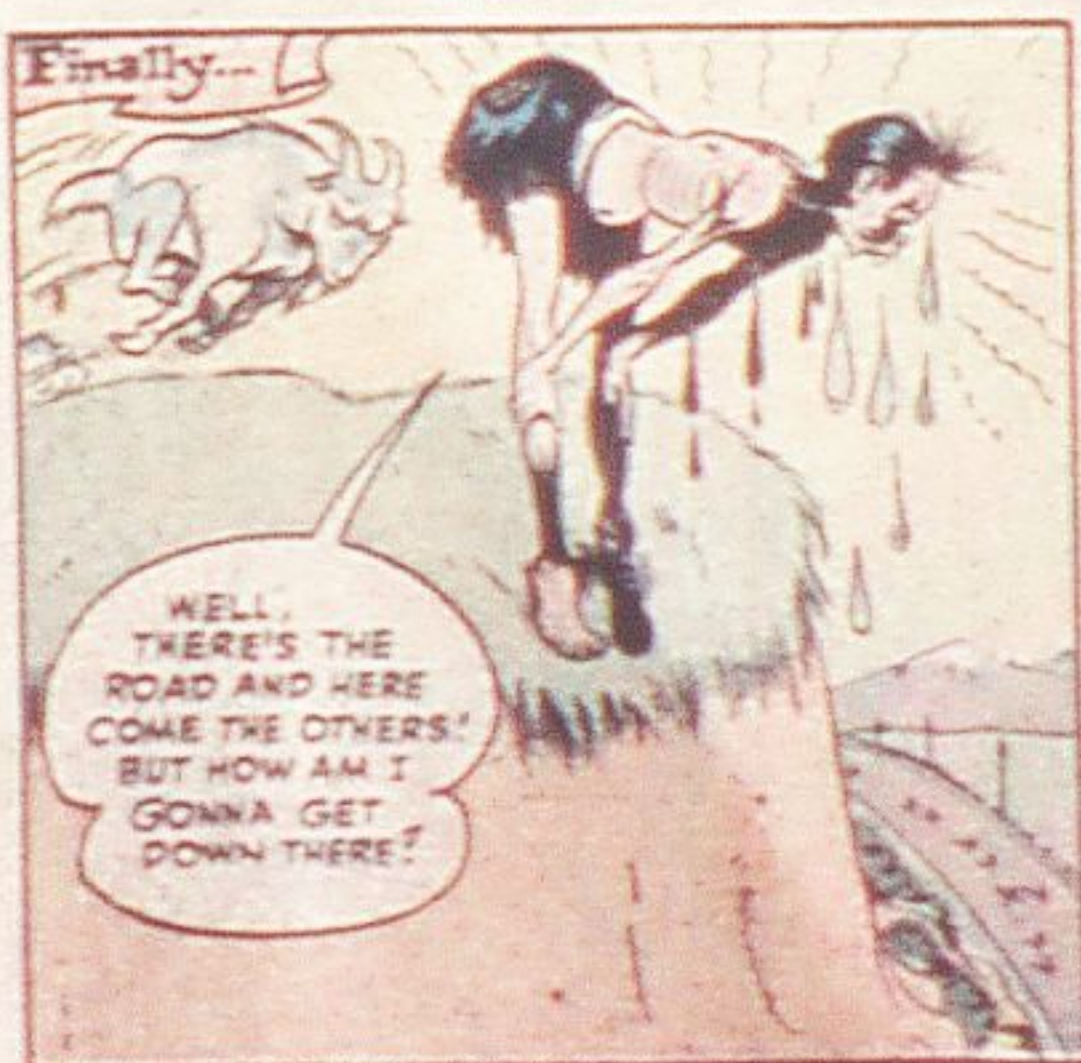
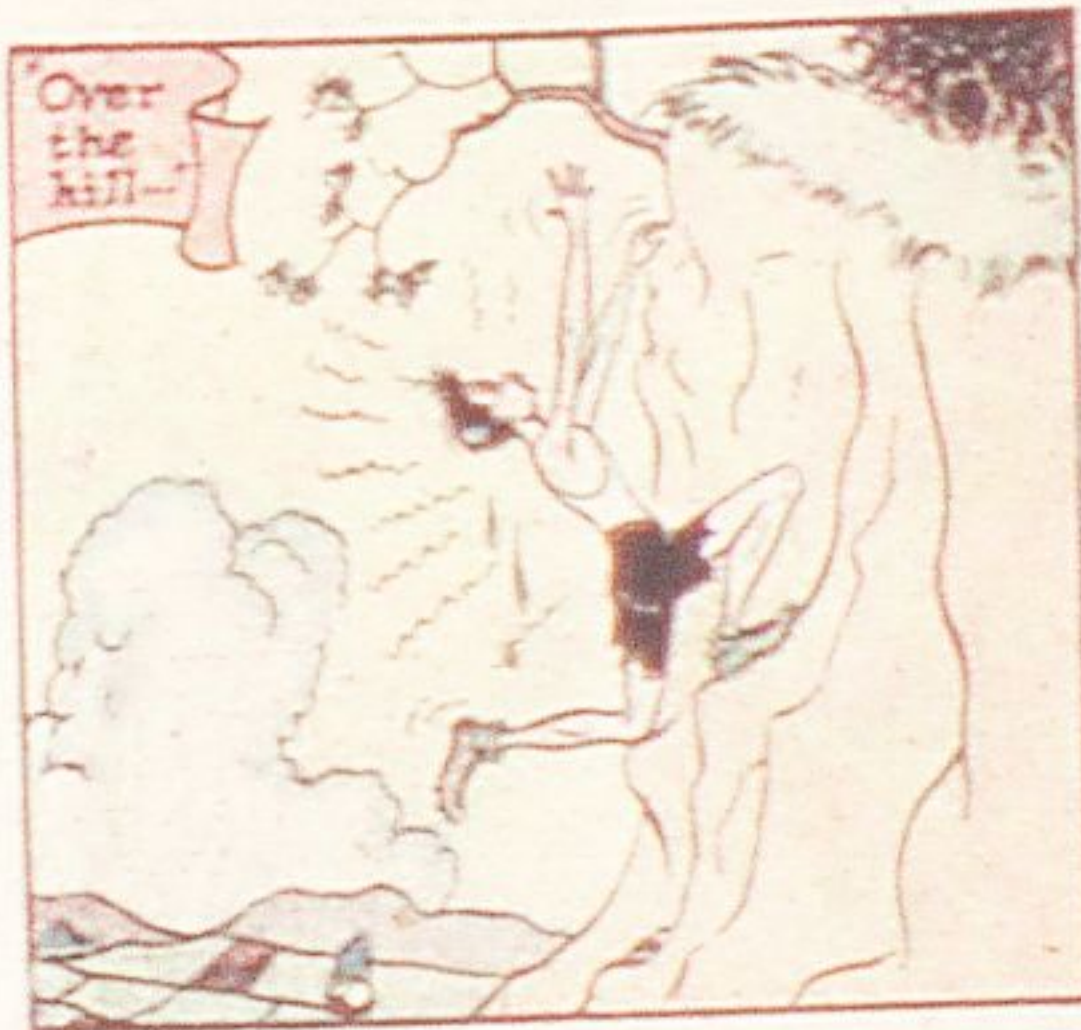
JUST SIGN HERE
AND BE AT THE
STARTING LINE
TOMORROW
AT TEN!

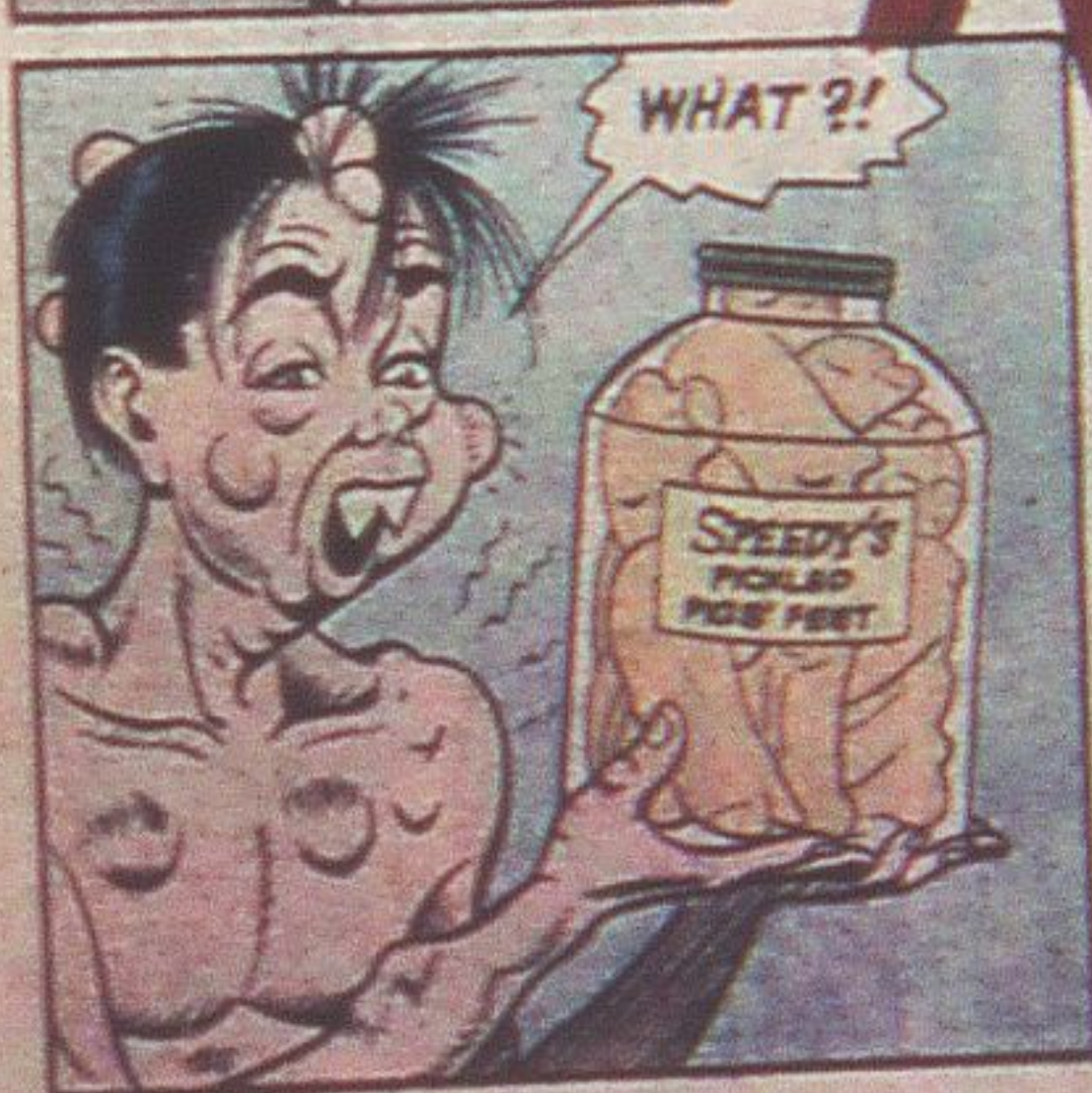




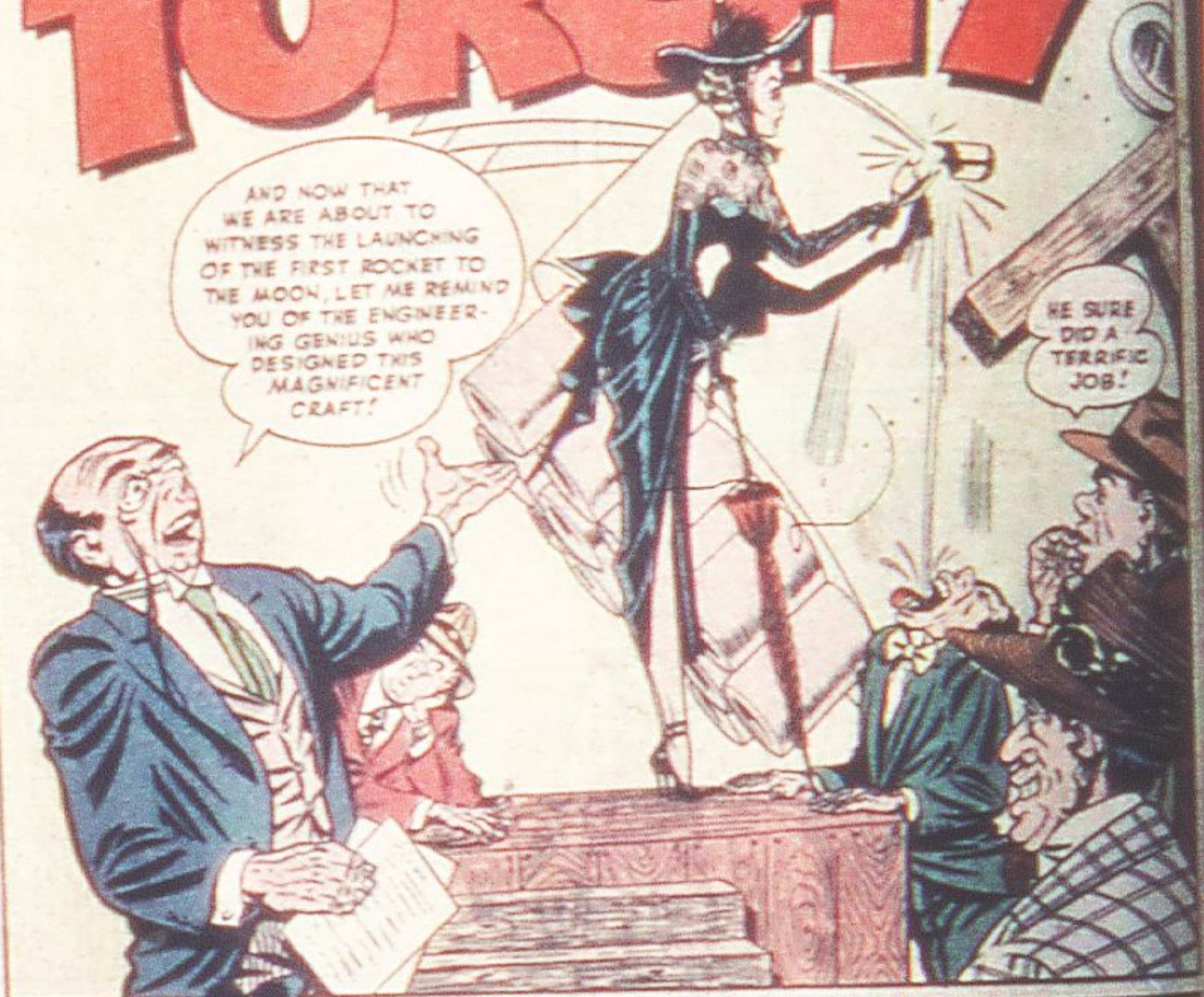








TORCHY



AND NOW THAT WE ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS THE LAUNCHING OF THE FIRST ROCKET TO THE MOON, LET ME REMIND YOU OF THE ENGINEERING GENIUS WHO DESIGNED THIS MAGNIFICENT CRAFT!

HE SURE DID A TERRIFIC JOB!



SOMETHING MUST BE HAPPENING!

JOE'S
RADIO
REPAIRS



YES - THE REPORT HAS JUST BEEN CONFIRMED! A MAN FROM SATURN HAS LANDED IN A ROCKET SHIP ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY!

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES! HE'LL KILL US ALL!



GOLLY! MAYBE I'D BETTER GET HOME, TOO!



IT'S HIM! IT'S THE MAN FROM SATURN! HE'S KIDNAPPING THAT POOR GIRL!

HELP!



HA! HA! NOT ONE OF THE EARTH MEN DARED COME TO YOUR AID! THEY KNEW THEY COULD NOT COPE WITH A MAN FROM SATURN!





WHAT NONSENSE YOU SPEAK, EARTH WOMAN! YOU SHOULD BE HONORED THAT I HAVE SELECTED YOU TO FLY HOME WITH ME AND MY ASSISTANTS!

HEAVENS! YOU BROUGHT OTHERS WITH YOU?



NATURALLY! THEY OBEY MY SLIGHTEST WISH! AND I'VE CARRIED YOU LONG ENOUGH! WALK NOW! SATURN MEN DO NOT TREAT WOMEN THE WAY EARTH FOOLS DO!

THEY DON'T? HOW DO THEY TREAT THEM?



ROUGHLY! AS WOMEN SHOULD BE TREATED! WE DO NOT HOLD FEMALES IN ESTEEM! AH! HERE WE ARE!



THE ROCKET SHIP IS READY, O MIGHTY SPOR! YOU HAVE BUT TO ENTER!

STEP IN, GIRL!



HEY! DON'T PUSH! I'VE GOT TO GET USED TO THIS IDEA!

OH SATURN A WOMAN DOES NAUGHT BUT OBEY!



WE'RE MOVING! OH, DEAR! I'LL PROBABLY NEVER SEE OLD MOTHER EARTH AGAIN!

BAH! YOU SHOULD BE GLAD TO LEAVE THE AWFUL PLACE! JUST THINK! WE ARE SHOOTING THROUGH SPACE AT A HUNDRED-THOUSAND MILES A MINUTE!



KLIX! IT FEELS AS IF WE'RE MOVING ABOUT A MILE AN HOUR!

OF COURSE! AS AN EARTHLING, YOUR BODY BECOMES INSENSITIVE TO MOTION AT SUCH SUPERSONIC SPEEDS!





YOU! YOU'RE THE GAL WHO WAS KIDNAPPED BY THE MAN FROM SATURN! WE SAW IT HAPPEN! BUT YOU ESCAPED! TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES!

LOOKS LIKE SHE HAD MORE EXPERIENCE THAN WE COUNTED ON!

WHERE IS SHE? WE LOST HER BECAUSE OF THE FOOL WOMEN!

A MOB FROM SATURN! IF THAT GAL COULD HANDLE THEM, WE CAN, TOO!

THEY'RE PHONIES! THESE GUYS AREN'T FROM SATURN!

LAY OFF! WE CONFESS! WE'RE FROM HOLLYWOOD! WE ACTED SO CONVINCINGLY THAT OUR GIRL FRIENDS AMONG THE EXTRAS THOUGHT WE MEANT IT!



IT WAS ALL A PUBLICITY STUNT! WE WANTED A GIRL TO SPREAD A STORY AROUND ABOUT LIFE ON SATURN, SO THAT PEOPLE WOULD GO SEE OUR NEW PICTURE, THE MAN FROM SATURN! WE DROPPED A FEW HINTS ON THE RADIO AND—

AFTER WE FINISHED SHOOTING THE SATURN SCENE WE WERE GOING TO HAVE HER TELL HER EXPERIENCES TO THE NEWS-PAPERS!

IT WOULD HAVE WORKED, TOO, IF THOSE BLASTED EXTRA GIRLS HADN'T GOTTEN JEALOUS OF THIS SUPER LOVELY AND CHANGED THE SCRIPT! OUCH!

SAVE THE COMPLIMENTS, MONSTER! HERE'S SOME EXTRA PUBLICITY, LIKE THE SURPRISE YOU PULLED ON ME!

As Torchy wends her way home one day...

PLEASE! WON'T SOMEBODY COME IN TO SEE OUR PICTURE?

WE SHOULD LOOK AT A MAN FROM SATURN WHEN WE CAN BE LOOKING AT HER?



Will BRAGG



OF C-COURSE
I'M NOT SCARED,
EFFY! I--I--JUST
DON'T BELIEVE IN
SHOOTING POOR
D-DEFENSELESS
ANIMALS!

WILL BRAGG is the biggest blowhard in town -- HE HAS TO BE -- to blow his foot out of his mouth! But when he tries to trade tall tales with a troupe of tigers, there's TROUBLE!



WELL, BOYS,
HOW DID THE
OLD TOWN
MANAGE
WHILE I WAS
GONE? ANY-
THING GO
WRONG?

WE
SURVIVED!

BRAGG
GOES AWAY
FOR A
WEEK AND
YOU'D THINK
HE'D BEEN
TO THE
MOON!



WILL, DARLING!
I'M SO GLAD
YOU'RE BACK IN
TIME! I'VE ONLY
ONE TICKET
LEFT FOR THE
LADIES' AID
SHOW TONIGHT!

EFFY, CALM
DOWN! YOU
KNOW I NEVER
GO TO THOSE
SISSY
LECTURES!

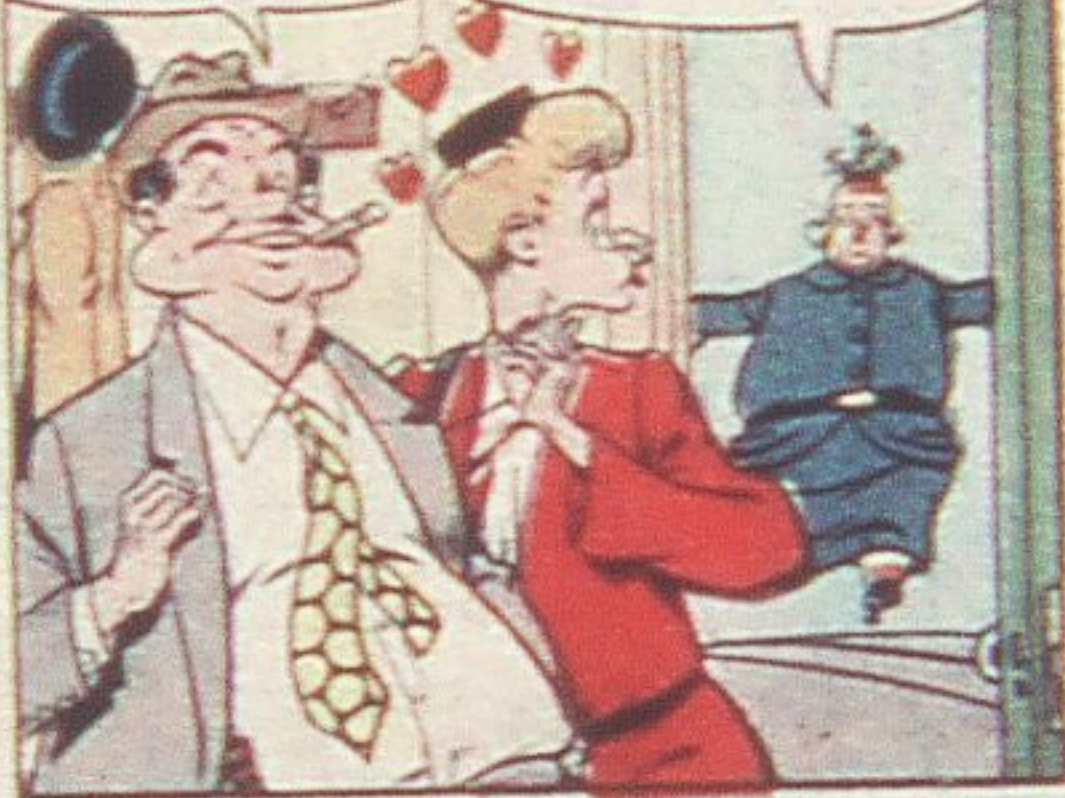
BESIDES,
I SPENT
MY LAST
THREE
BUCKS
ON BUS
FARES!

WELL, WILL, HAVEN'T YOU
HEARD? THIS SHOW IS
DIFFERENT—ERNEST
BRAGG, THE FAMOUS
WILD ANIMAL HUNTER,
IS APPEARING AND—

WILD ANIMALS, INDEED!
PROBABLY A FAKE, IF MY
GUESS IS CORRECT!
NOW, WHEN I WAS ON
MY LAST SHOOT IN
AFRICA, I—

—I WAS KNOWN AS
THE MOST FEARLESS
HUNTSMAN ON THE
DARK CONTINENT!

EFFY! DON'T BOTHER
SELLING THAT LAST
TICKET! SOMETHING
TERRIBLE'S HAPPENED!



OH, MY—
WILL! HE'S
OUR ONLY
HOPE!

FIRST YOU WANT TO
SELL ME A TICKET—
NOW YOU DON'T! I'M
YOUR ONLY HOPE FOR
WHAT?

WILL, YOU'D BE DOING
US A GREAT SERVICE!
STAGG IS ILL—CAN'T
APPEAR! BUT YOU
SAID YOU KNEW
ALL ABOUT WILD
ANIMALS AND—

WELL, ER, AH,
BARRUMPH!
I'M SURE I COULD
WHIP UP A SHORT
SPEECH—

RUM?



BRAGG!
DON'T
UNDERSTAND!

OF COURSE I
UNDERSTAND!
YOU THINK I'M
BLUFFING—WELL,
TONIGHT YOU'LL
FIND OUT HOW I
CAN TAKE OVER
AS AN EMERGENCY
LECTURER!

MY
HERO!

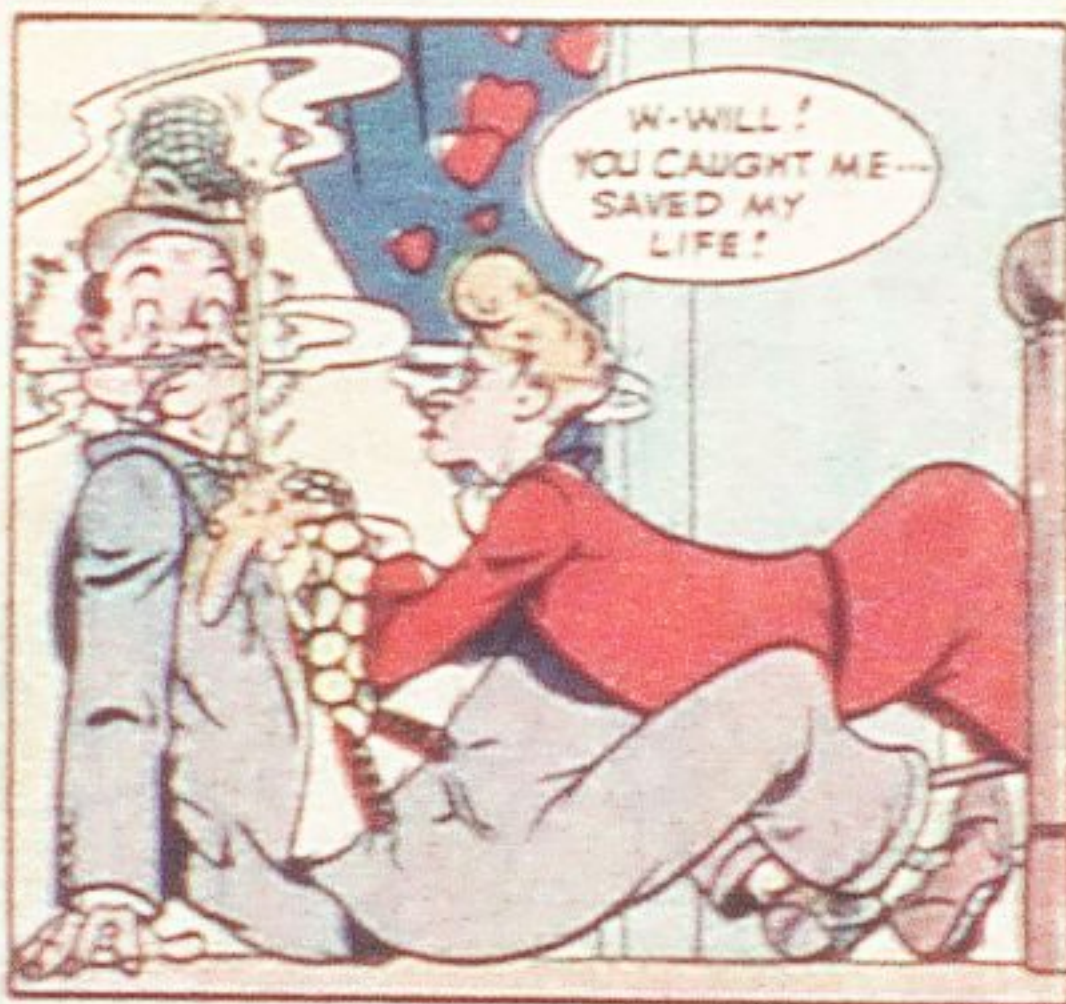
WILL BRAGG, I
TAKE BACK EVERY-
THING I'VE EVER
SAID ABOUT YOU
IN THE PAST! AND
I'VE SAID PLENTY!

SHALL WE GO,
LADIES? AND
INCIDENTALLY,
YOU MEN MIGHT
DROP BY TONIGHT,
JUST TO PICK UP A
FEW POINTERS ON
THE HABITS AND
CUSTOMS OF
THE FARAWAY
BEASTS OF
THE FIELD!

DON'T WORRY!
WE WON'T BE
FAR
AWAY!

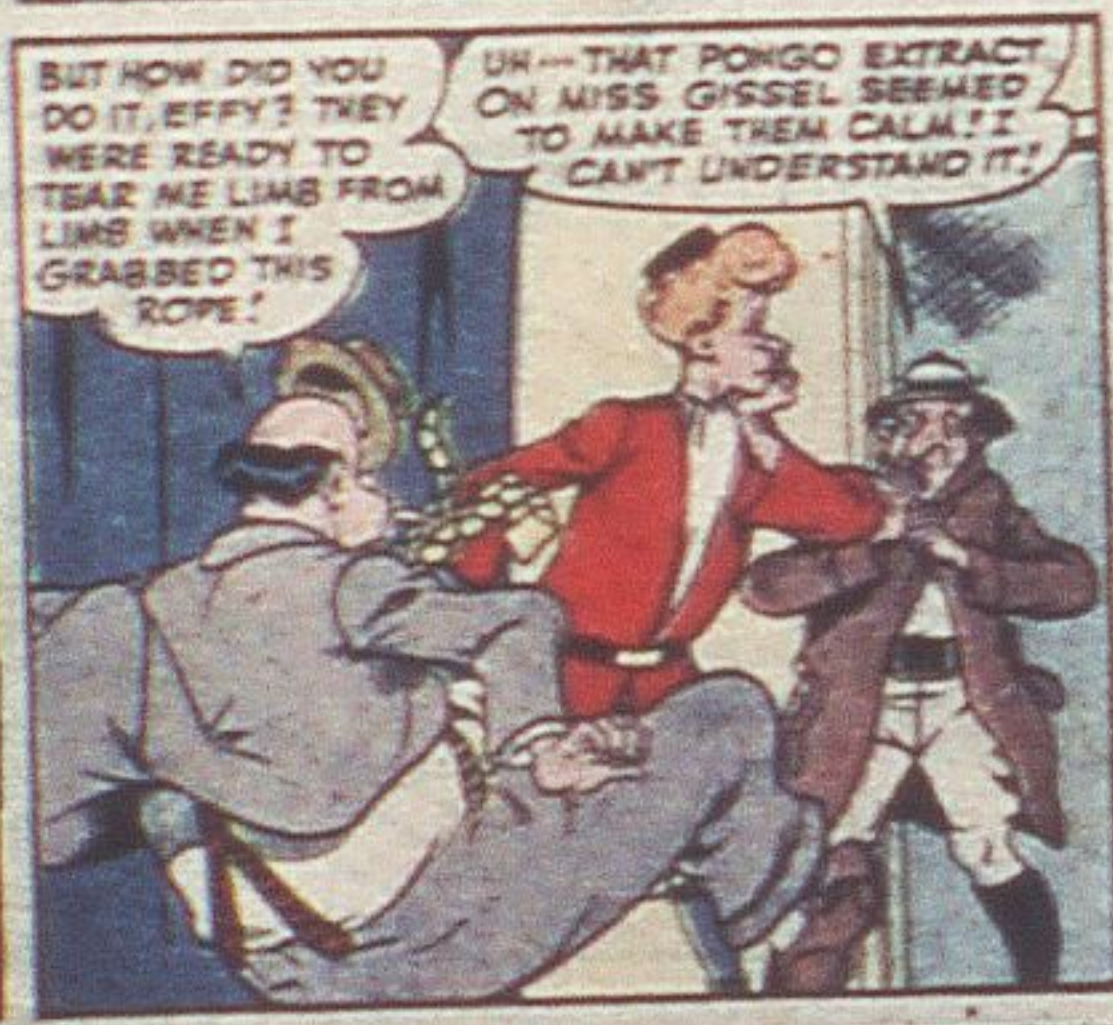
THAT'S
ONE
SHOW
NOBODY
IN TOWN
WILL
MISS!



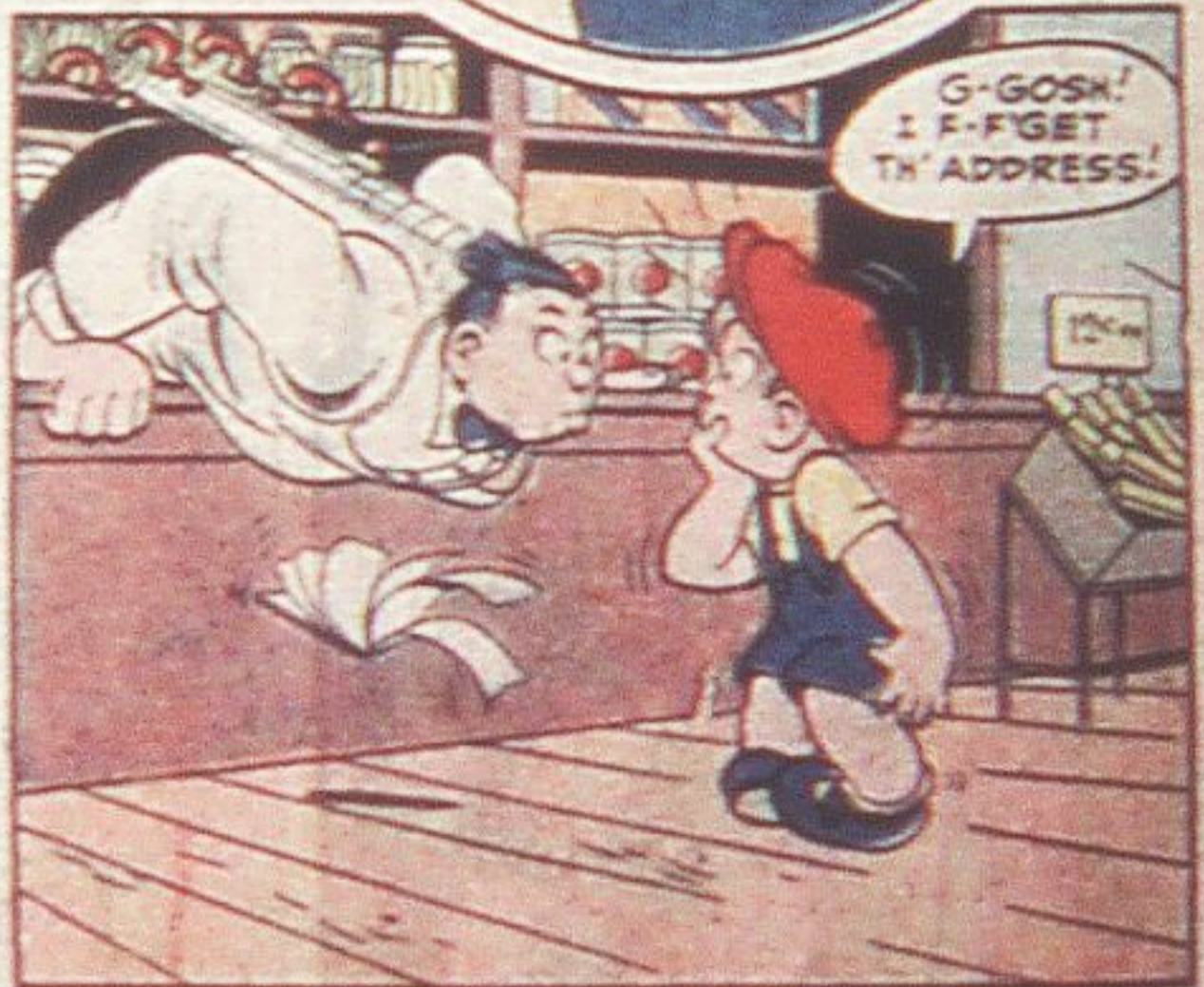
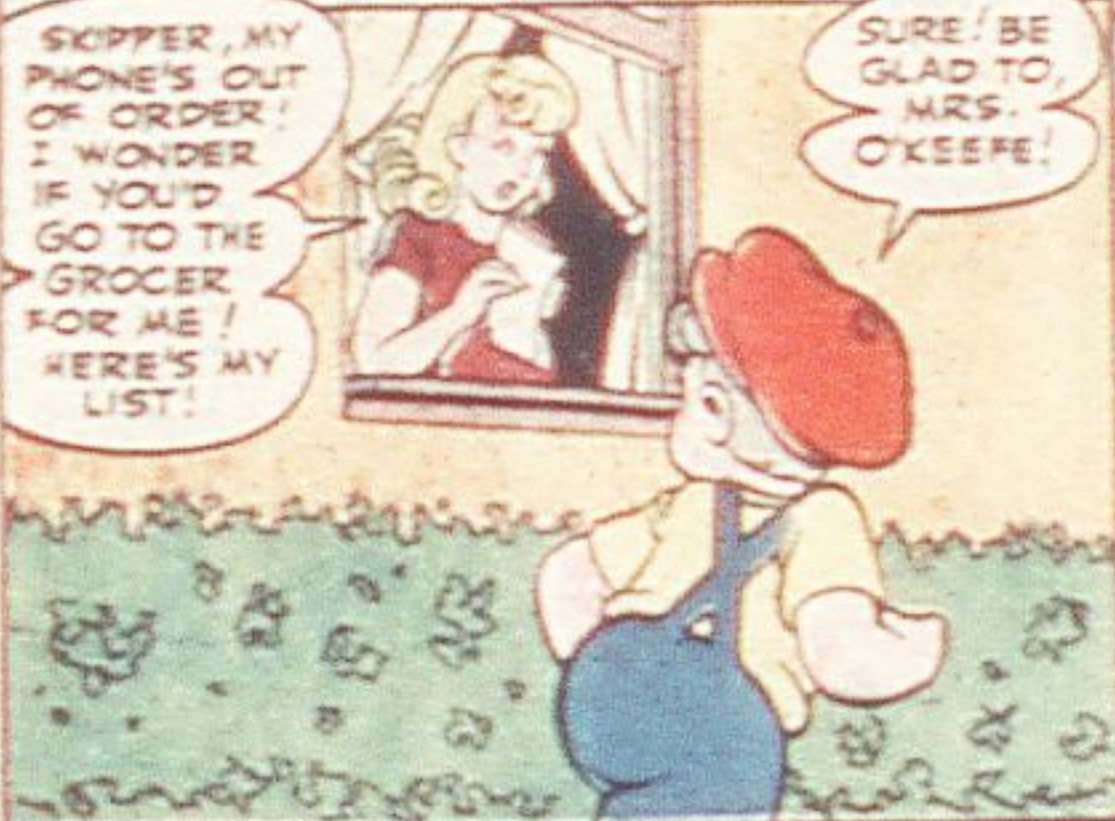








SKIPPER



EZRA

WHAT'S THIS?
IS EZRA THE
LADIES'-MAN
OF THE YEAR?



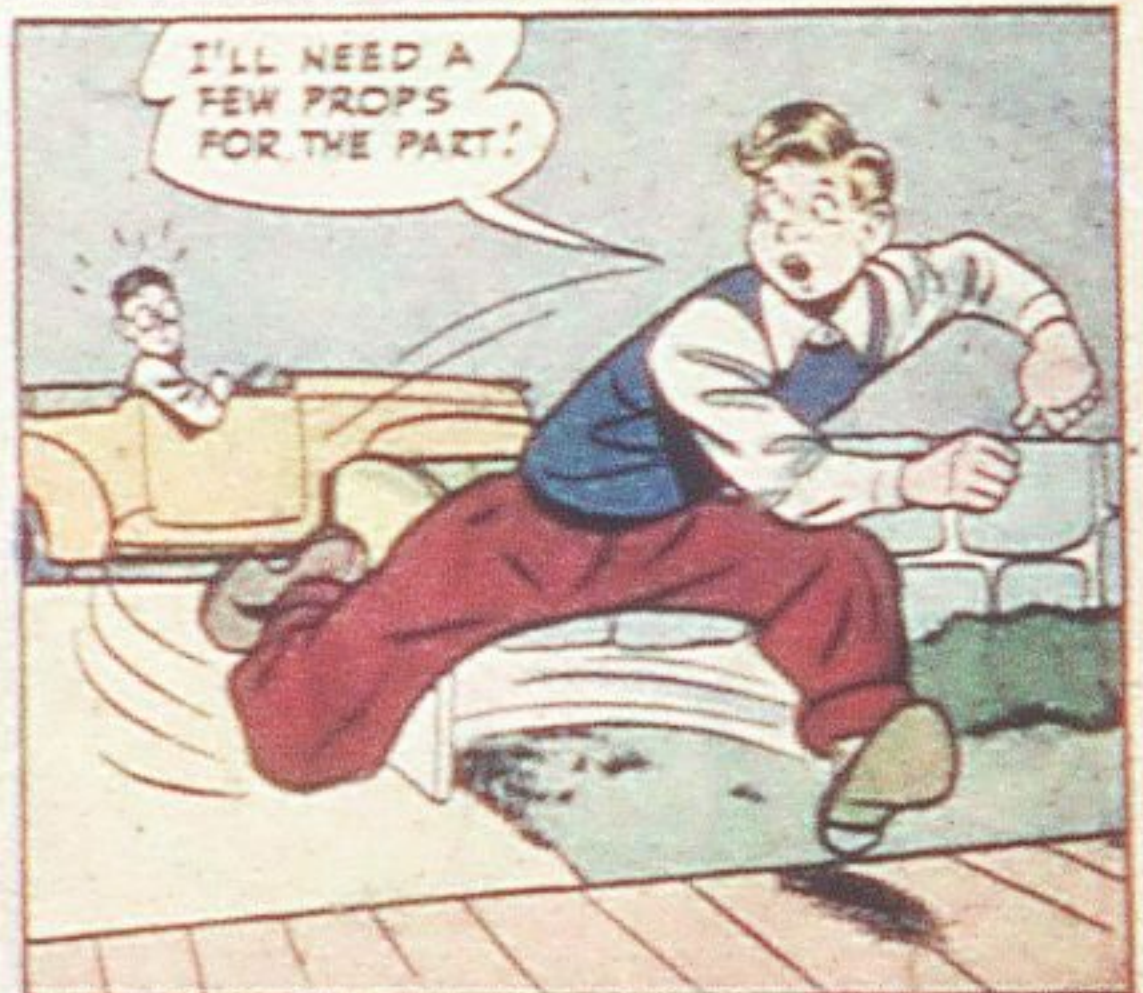
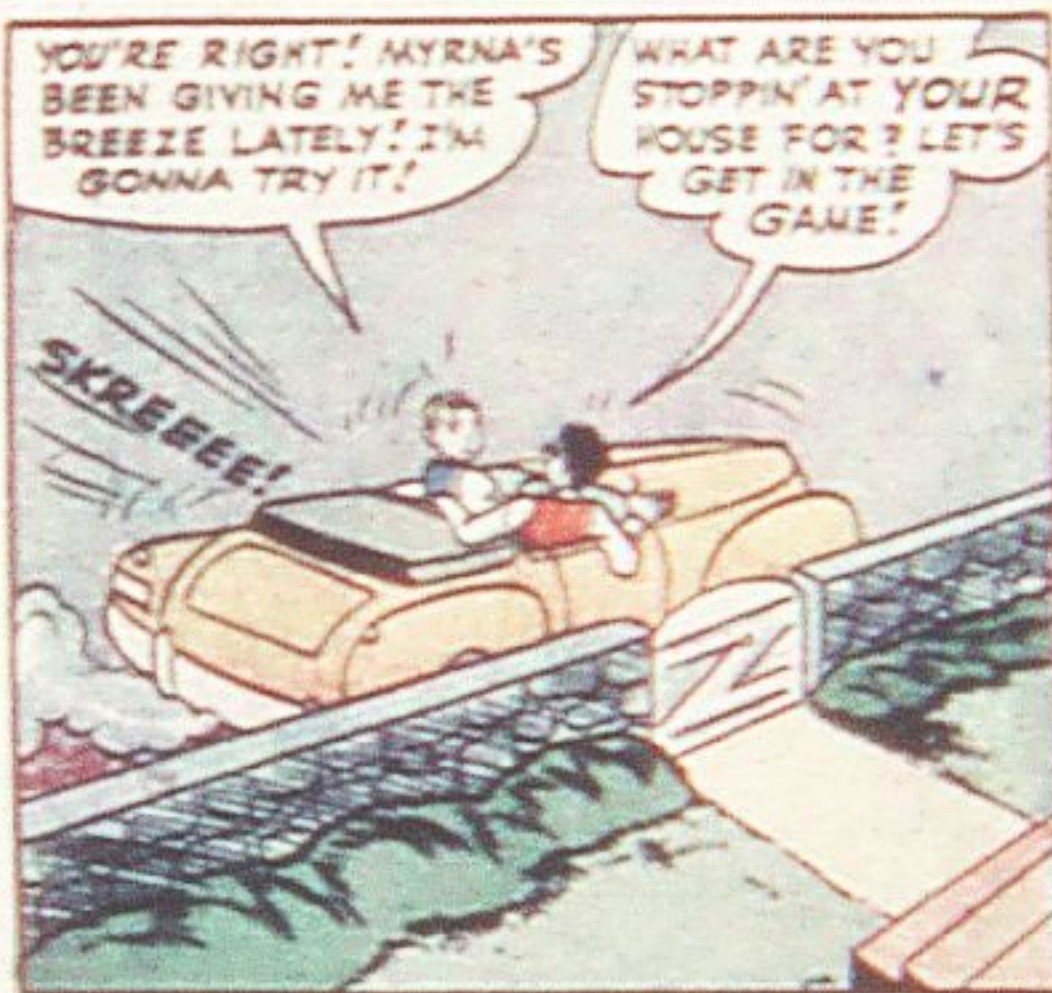
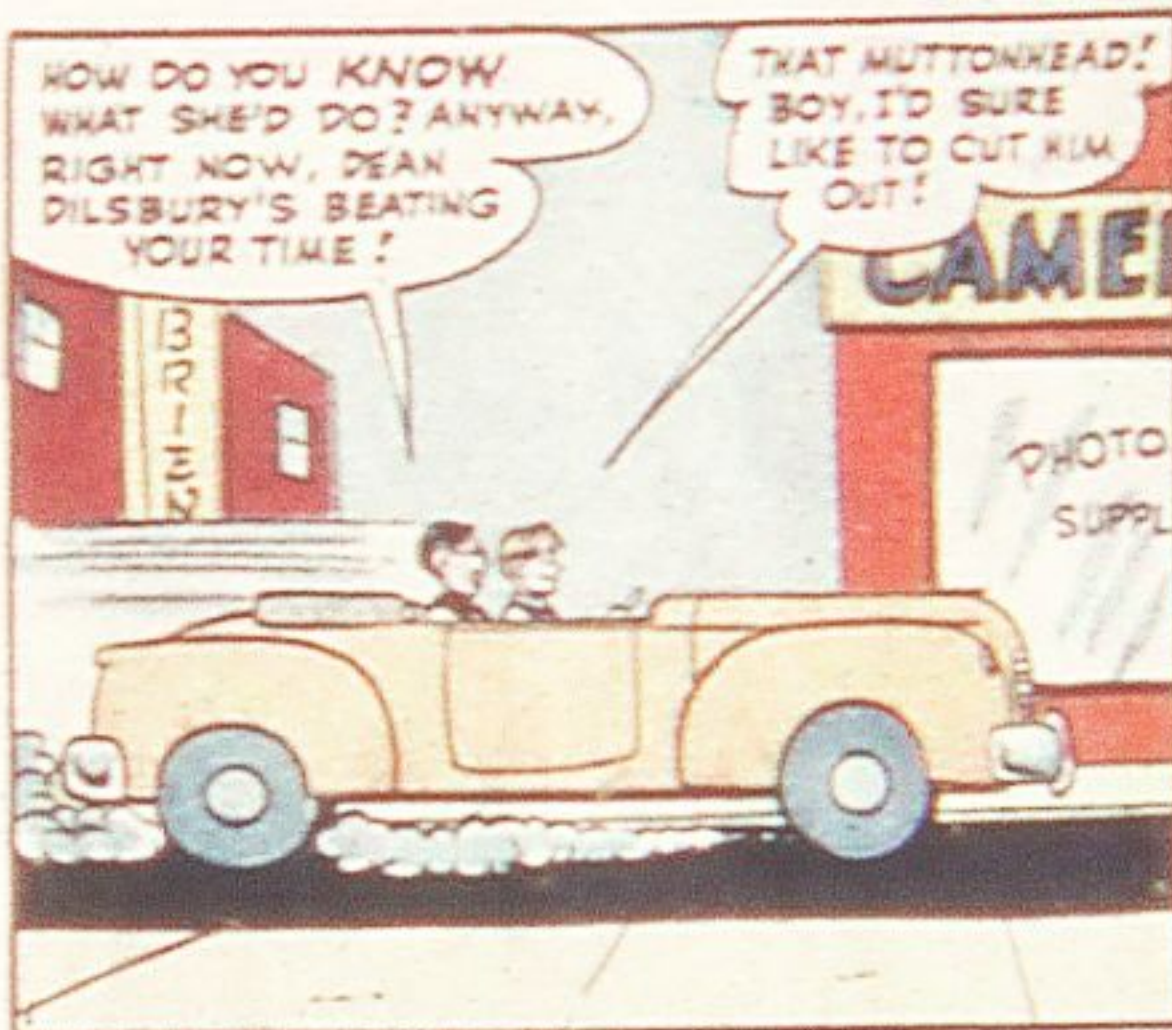
OW! MUMFREE
HOGARTH IS SOME
PERATOR, HUH,
EZRA?

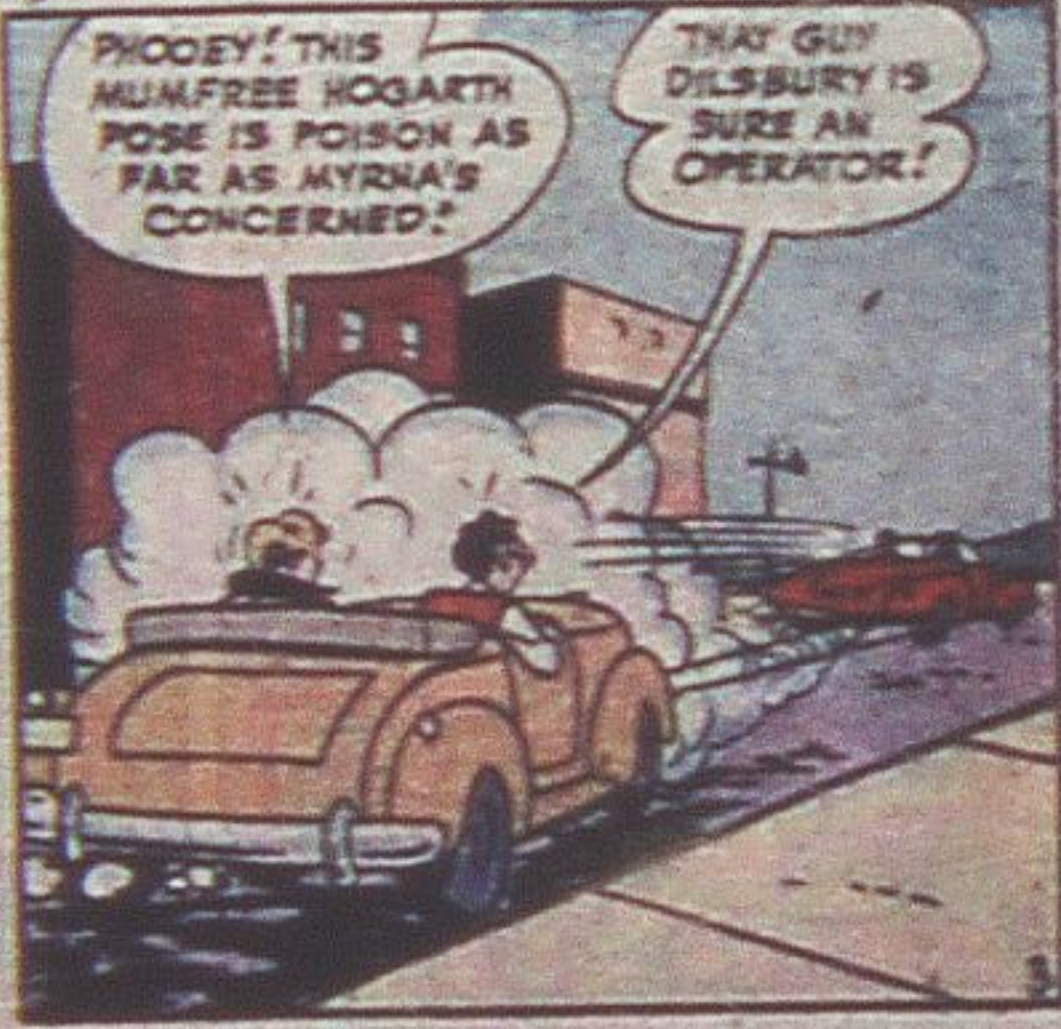
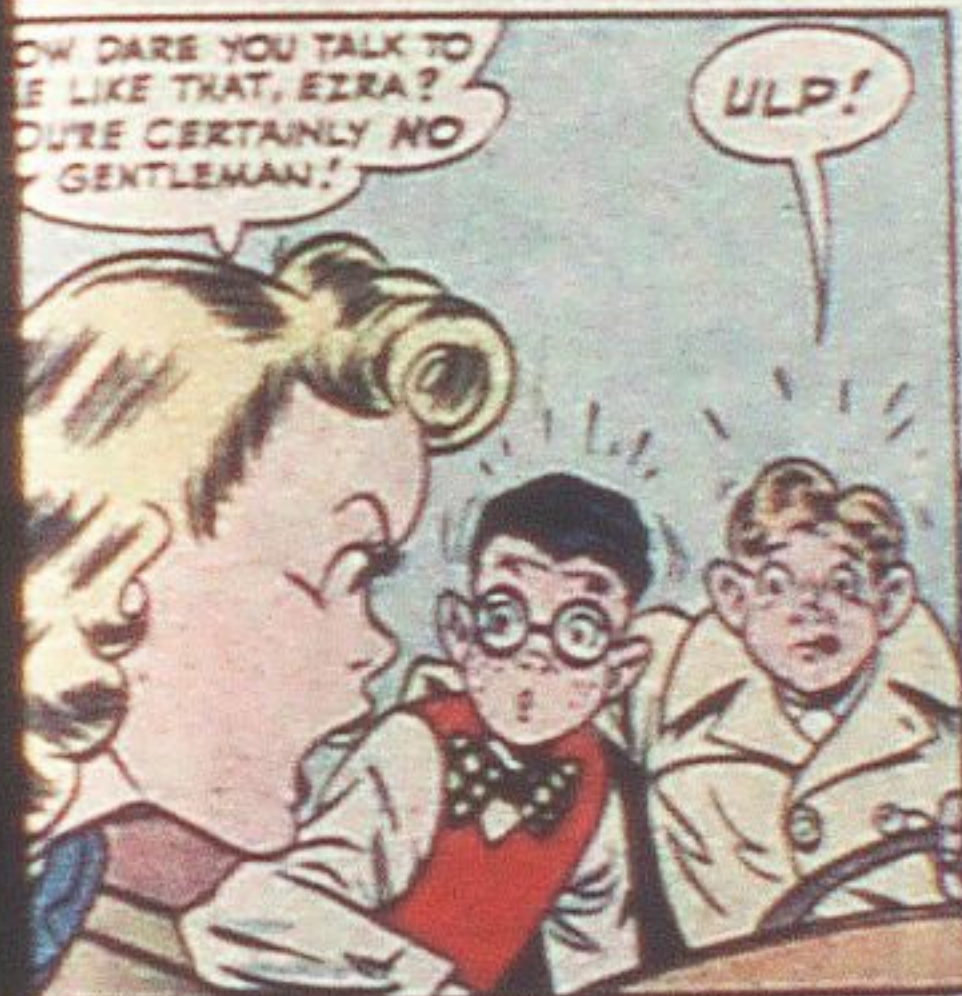
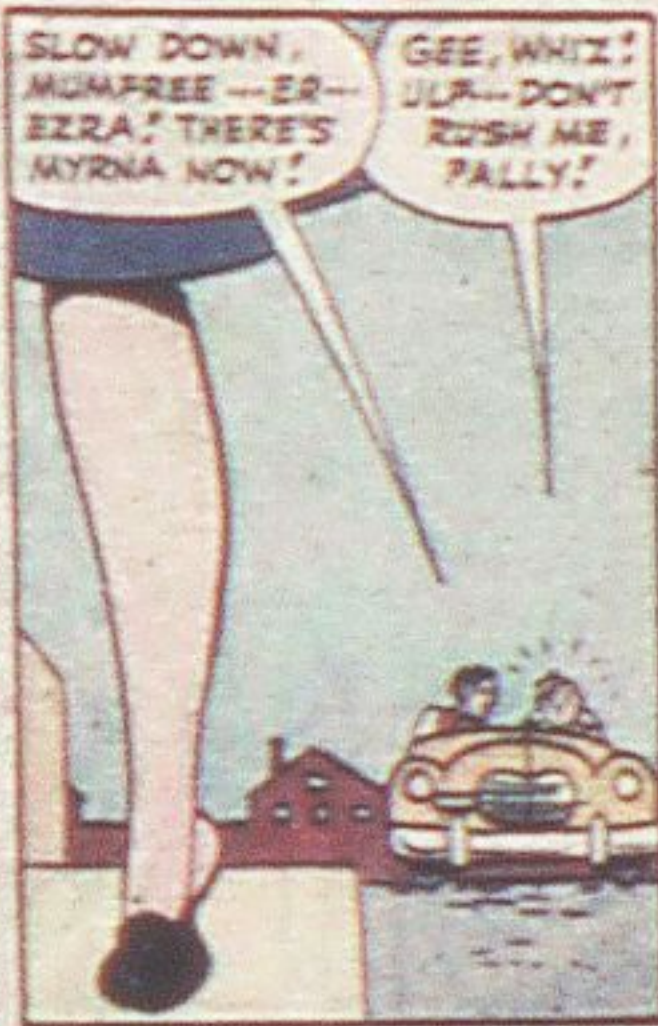
YEAR, ROLLO! HE TREATS THE
GIRLS TIGHT AND THEY LOVE
IT! I JUST DON'T
UNDERSTAND!

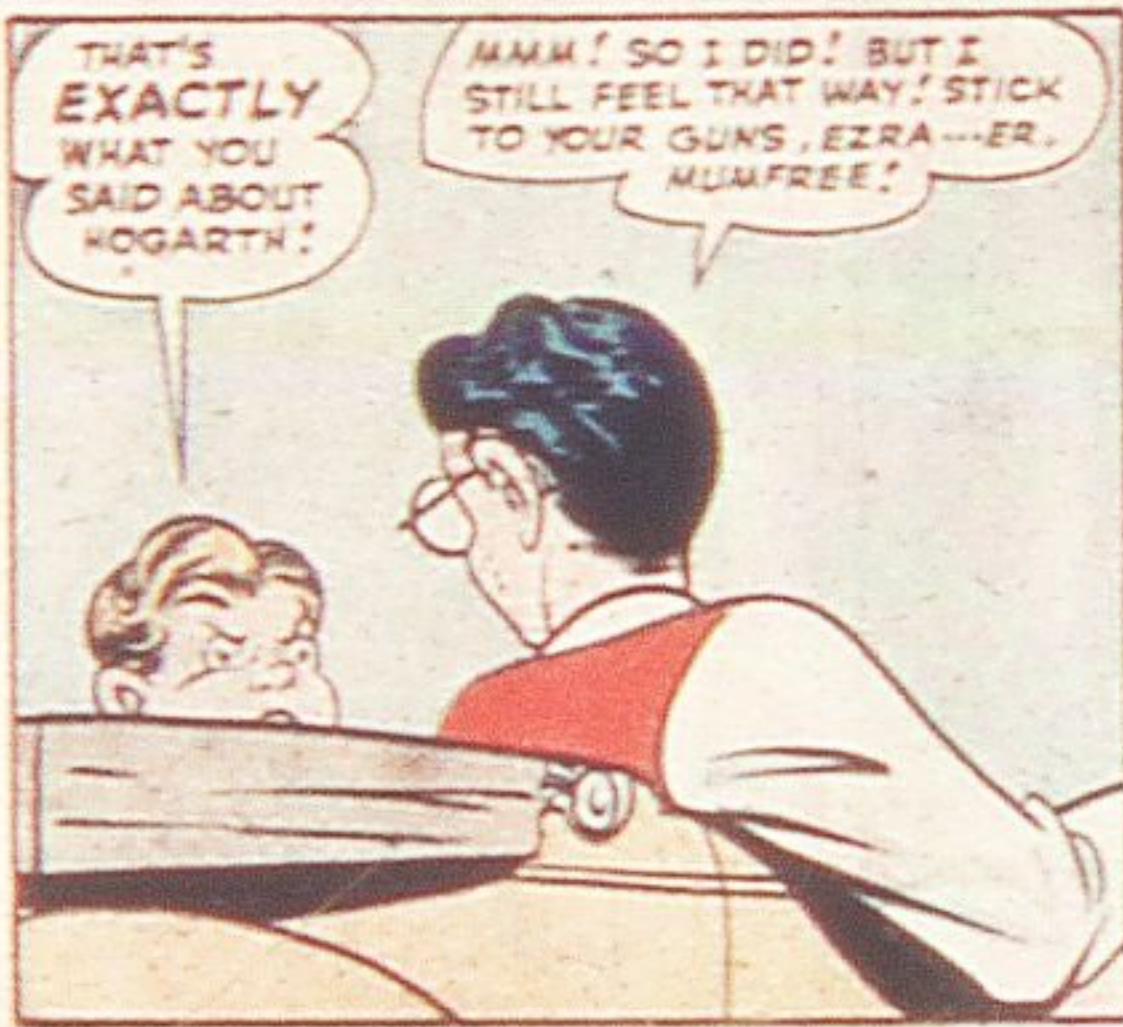
DON'T UNDERSTAND?
LISTEN, CHUM. THAT'S
EXACTLY WHY THEY
GO FOR HIM!

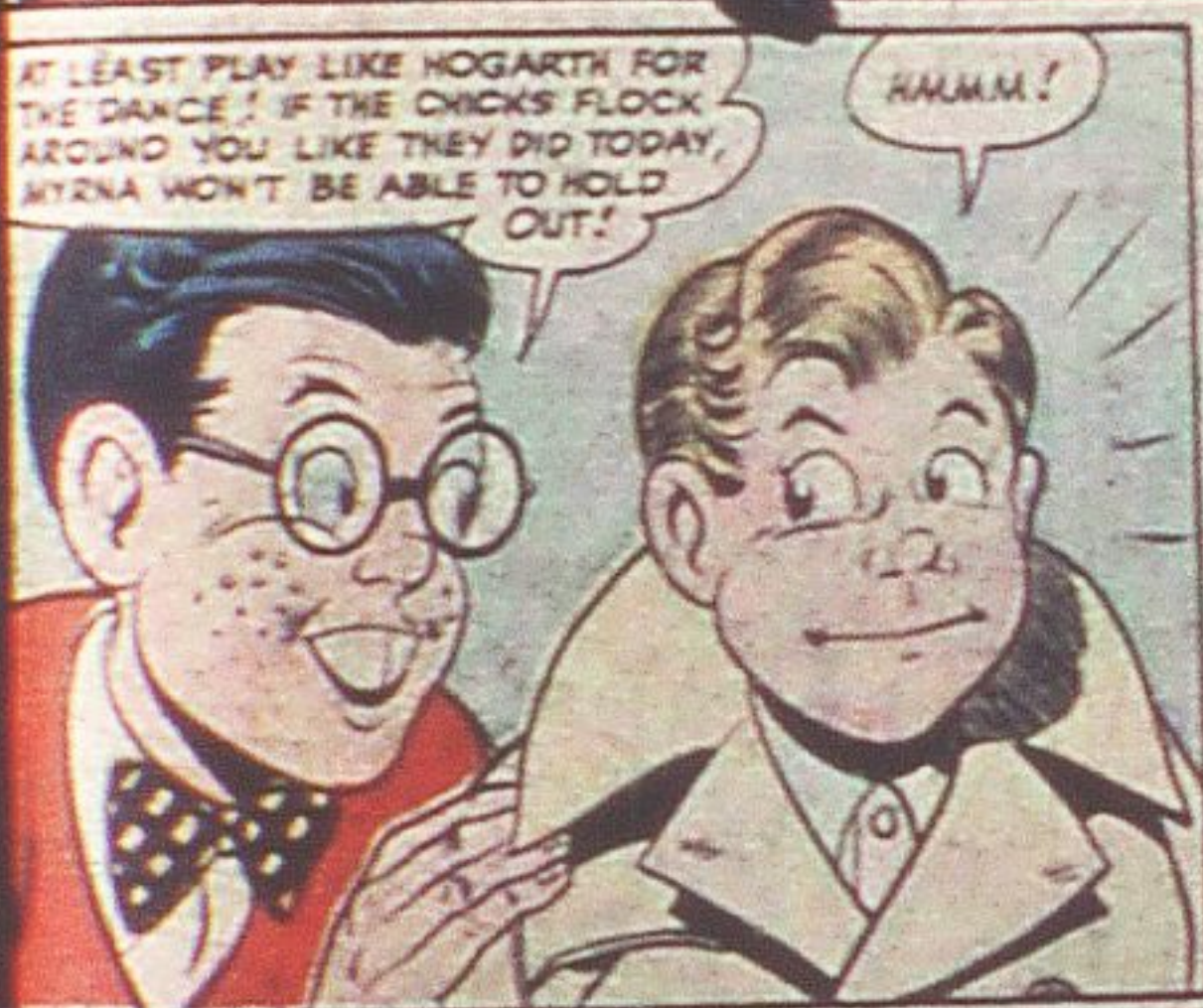
JUST THE SAME, I
CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
WHY, IF I TRIED
THAT WITH MYRNA,
SHE'D—















The CENTURY Powder

THE seven men plodded through the dripping jungle. They spoke no words. They had stopped speaking many days ago. Now all their strength went into the effort of walking, and fighting the giant vines and lianas.

The heat was intense, sapping their manhood. Mosquitoes buzzed in a cloud about them, and their faces were swollen and puffed beyond recognition, even though each wore head nets.

This was the Brazilian jungle, and the seven men had plodded through it for five weeks now without seeing another living man. Of animals there were many, and twice their lives had been threatened by huge jaguars, called *tigres* by the natives.

Now, only the dripping, steamy silence of the great jungle surrounded them. Towering forest giants, laced with orchids and other creepers, made their trail one of perpetual twilight.

Blackhawk, the tall leader of this group, strode slightly in the lead. Then he halted suddenly, and for the first time in three days broke the conversational silence.

"Men," he said, "I think we're getting close. I don't know why, only I feel different."

Chuck, the only other American in the party, said, "I'll never feel any different. I'm perfectly numb."

Blackhawk had taken up the trail again and didn't reply. He knew, by some strange intuition, that the end of the trail was near.

The end of the trail! What did it imply? What didn't it imply? If the weird tales brought from this jungle were only half true, then mankind would be benefited a thousand fold by the secret locked in the forest. The secret of perpetual youth!

Blackhawk smiled a little to himself. Old Ponce de Leon had searched for the fountain of youth in ancient Florida. Scientists down through Time had been searching—in vain.

There was one thing certain, a tribe of Brazilian aborigines lived to be well over a century old. Some were even reputed to be two hundred years of age.

Such a discovery would mean a great boon to the world.

Blackhawk plodded on, every mile becoming more unbearable. The heat was more intense as they dropped lower into the great valley that sheltered the tribe they sought.

Stanislaus the big Balkan, stumbled and would have fallen but for the timely grab made by Olaf, the Scandinavian member of the group.

"What iss, Stan?" said Olaf. "I grap you joost in time, else in de poison mud you go."

"Thanks, Olaf," said the Balkan. "Sometimes I think I'd just as well sink into the mud and forget it all."

A Dutch guttural followed this exchange: "It is not goot to slip in der mud, Stan—even forever."

It was Hendrickson who had spoken. He was big and bulky, the only one in the group whom the mosquitoes didn't bother. The others said he was poison to them.

A muted yell from Blackhawk brought all of them hurrying to his side. The tall leader was pointing down into the valley, where a village lay beside a gleaming river.

"Our destination, men," he said. "We'll take a short rest here and go on. We may have some trouble down there."

They stretched out, and almost instantly all of them were sleeping soundly. They were tired out.

Blackhawk awoke first. He sat up. It was evening. Already cook fires burned in the village below them. It was time to go.

Chop Chop, the little Chinese of the group, had been making tea while the others slept. Now he sanded it out, keeping up a running fire chatter the while.

"Ha," said he, "me livem thlee hunnerd year. Go back China someday, sellum live-long tonic for much yen!"

Andre chuckled. In his droll French accent he said, "Forget it, Chop. You weel furnish some headhunter a fine meal long before you are feefty, no?"

They took off down the valley in the false dawn. A mile from the walled village they halted, waiting for the sun to come up. As Blackhawk said, "It is better that we go boldly to their village."

The seven men had hardly appeared in the sunny clearing when a burst of drums broke out behind the village walls. Then the gates swung open. Out poured a horde of short, squat men with long, matted hair and beards. If they were old, as they looked, their actions belied their age. They raced across the clear-

ing like youngsters, brandishing long spears and swinging stout clubs. Those in the van carried enormous bows and six-foot arrows.

"Probably poisoned," observed Blackhawk. "Better break out the netting suits."

These were the invention of Blackhawk, for just such an occasion. As the seven men quickly donned the steel wire mesh armor, the savages crept up to within arrow range. Now they cut loose with a volley. But the seven men stood their ground.

The arrows all found their marks. But they merely stuck in the mesh. Several volleys were fired as the white men advanced steadily toward the oncoming party. But as nothing apparently happened, the natives became alarmed. After a moment they turned and fled back to their village, slamming the gate.

Blackhawk said, "I don't know whether we've done the right thing or not. They're frightened of us now."

"We'd have been dead pigeons without these suits of tin underwear," said Chuck facetiously. "They sure stopped those darts, eh?"

"We must be careful now," said Blackhawk. "or we'll spoil everything. The tin suits have them in a dither. Now we must display friendship."

They stalked boldly to the gates and demanded admittance. Slowly the heavy gates swung inward. A few frightened faces appeared in the entrance way.

Blackhawk stepped forward, lifting his right hand and smiling. He said something in a Brazilian native dialect. One of the savages grinned, and the gates opened quickly.

The chief was a short, heavy man, covered with thick hair and white beard. He held up his right hand with his palm against that of Blackhawk. Each of six other men imitated the chief. Soon all were seating themselves to a feast of what Andre swore later was stewed dog.

Stanislaus was the first one to sense trouble. He complained of a pain in his stomach. Soon after that he fell over, and his body began twitching.

"Quick!" he gasped. "They've poisoned us. An emetic—hurry!"

Chuck leaped to administer first aid, but was gripped by the terrible pains before he reached Stan. Then Olaf and Andre were rolling on the ground. After that it was something none of them could ever remember. They all fell into black sleep and evil dreams.

When he came to, Blackhawk found himself tied securely across a stone sacrificial block. An old priest stood over him with a knife lifted above his heart. Blackhawk spoke in

the native dialect. The priest beckoned to a native who seemed to understand.

Blackhawk said, "Why am I to be sacrificed?"

The native interpreted. The priest spoke. Then the native said, "Ako the Ancient will make you live forever. He will make all your friends live forever. Ako is very old."

The old priest still held the knife high.

Blackhawk said, "How is Ako going to do this?"

"He will make small hole in chest, put in sacred powder," replied the interpreter. "Ako now ready."

Blackhawk squirmed enough to see around the stone block. He noticed the faces of most of his friends, plus countless savages. He thought, "Well, if these fellows inject themselves with this powder, it can't harm me."

"Let Ako proceed," he said.

Ako lowered the knife gently, made a short incision just above the heart, and sprinkled into the wound a bit of whitish powder. Blackhawk's chest immediately felt cold, contracted. But there was no other pain or discomfort. What was this powder?

His bonds were cut and he sat up on the block. He felt a little faint, but he got to his feet. The savages yelled and howled. Blackhawk apparently was now one of them. They salaamed before him. He grinned. Then he noticed that every native's chest was bleeding from a small incision above the heart. Stranger still, he saw that his friends all wore several days' beards!

"What is this?" he asked. "What's happened?"

The interpreter was there. He said, "You have lived many years, white man. Much time has passed. You are now an ancient!"

Blackhawk looked at his friends. "What goes?" he demanded.

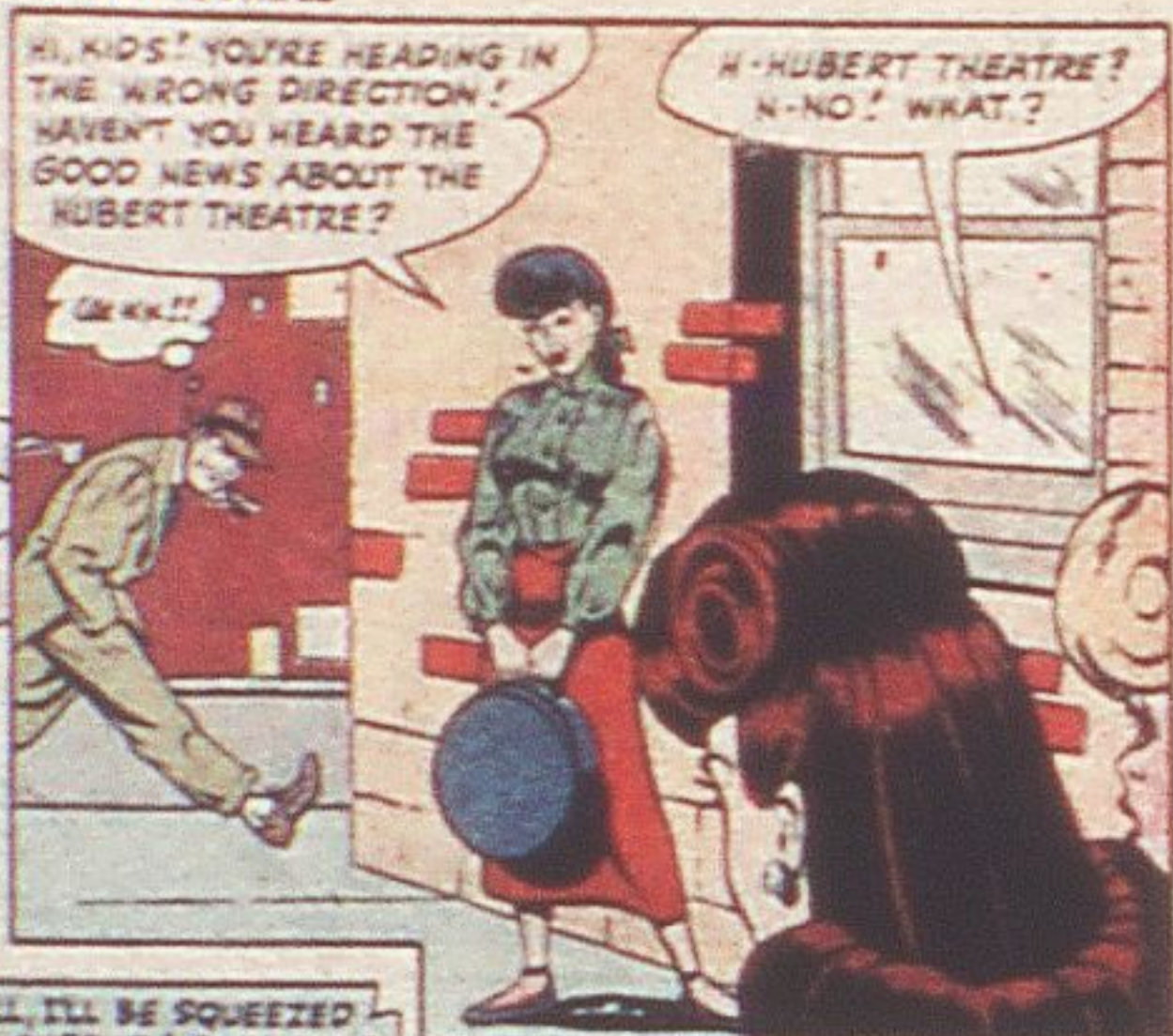
Chuck said, "Ah, these yahoos gave you a shot of some drug and you passed out for a couple of days. They all took a shot. We just hung around trying to wake you. How do you feel?"

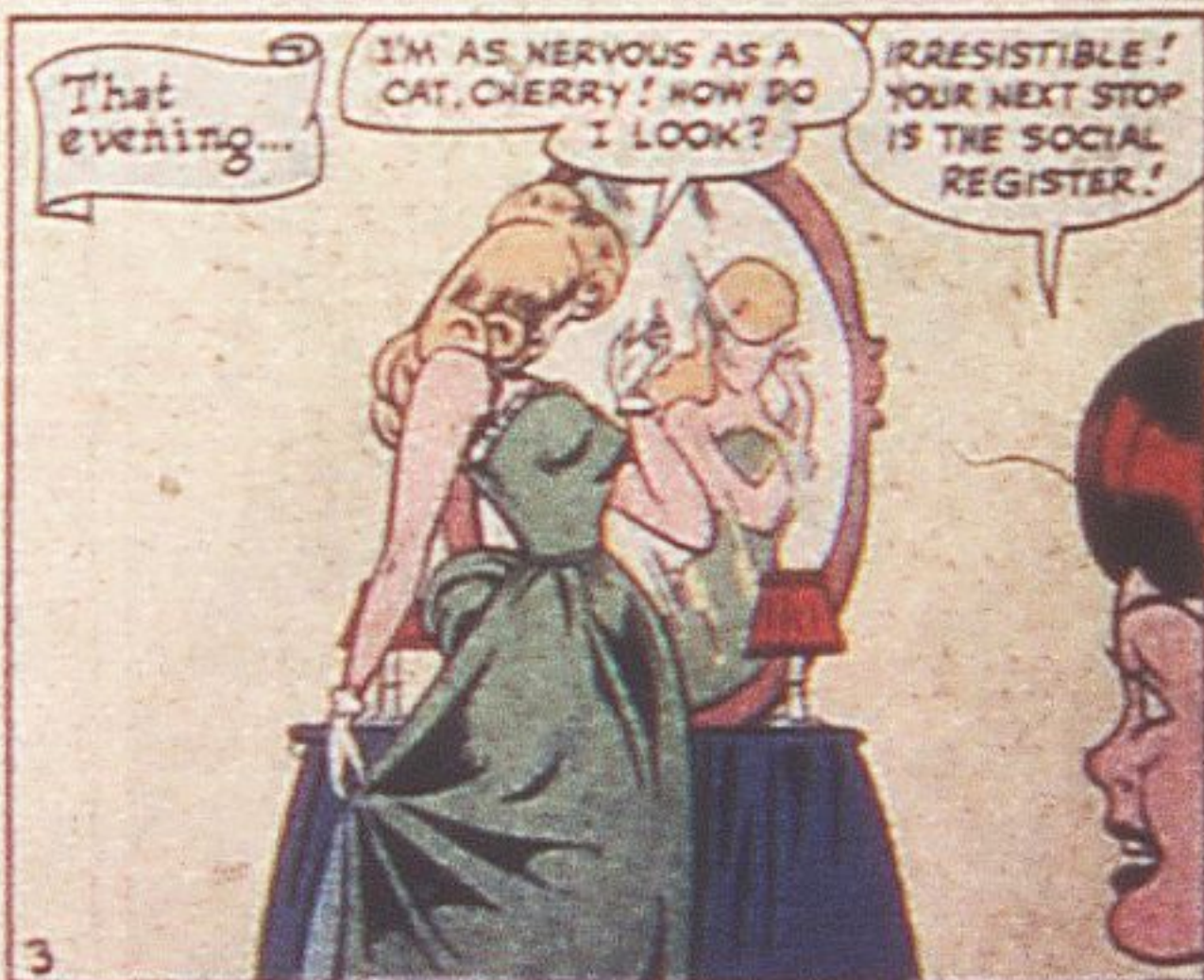
"Okay. So that's their idea of becoming immortal," said Blackhawk. "They blank out with a drug for a day or two and think years have passed. This is good, fellows. So this is what we take back to civilization! Of course, there's something else we'll carry back home."

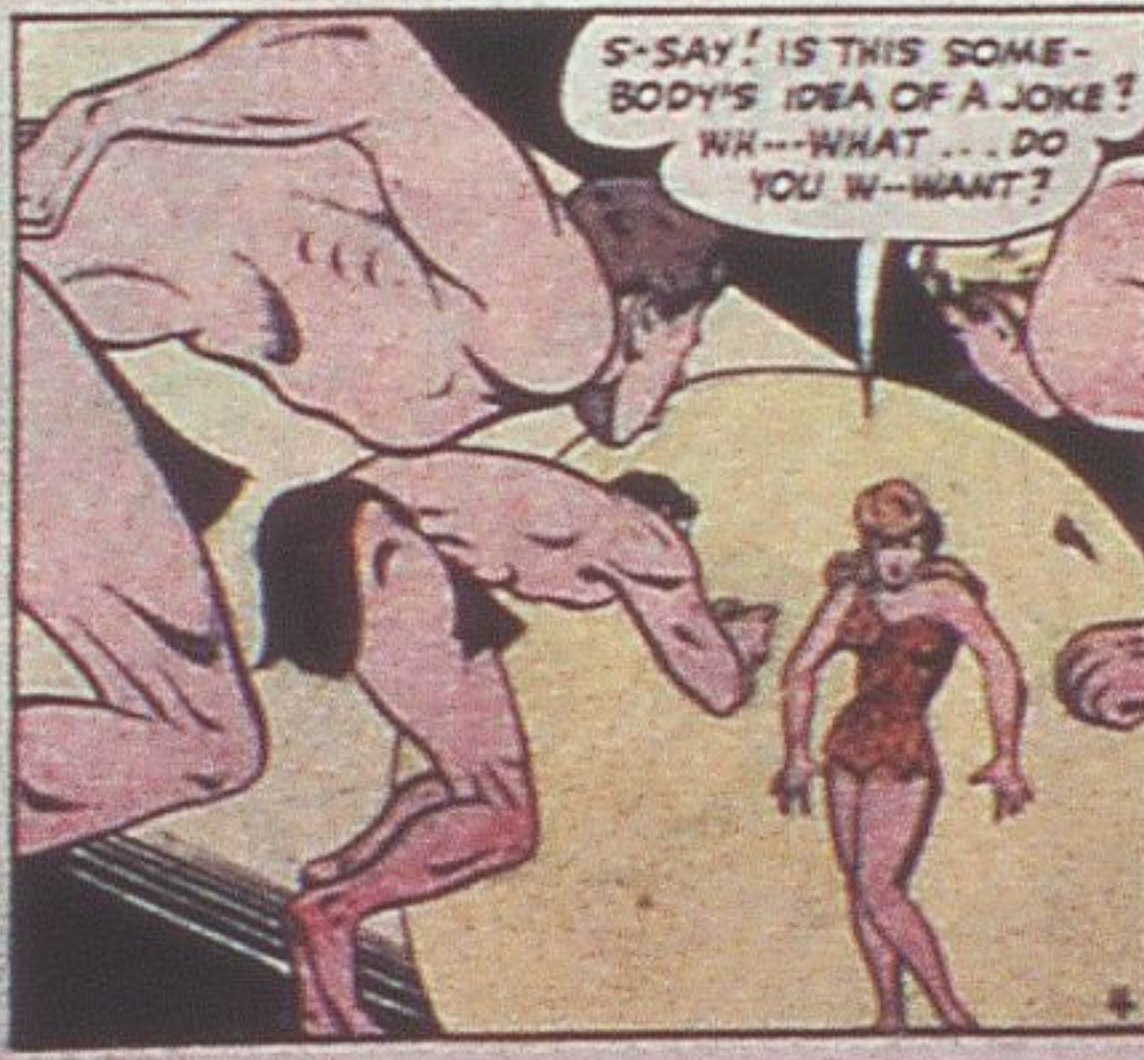
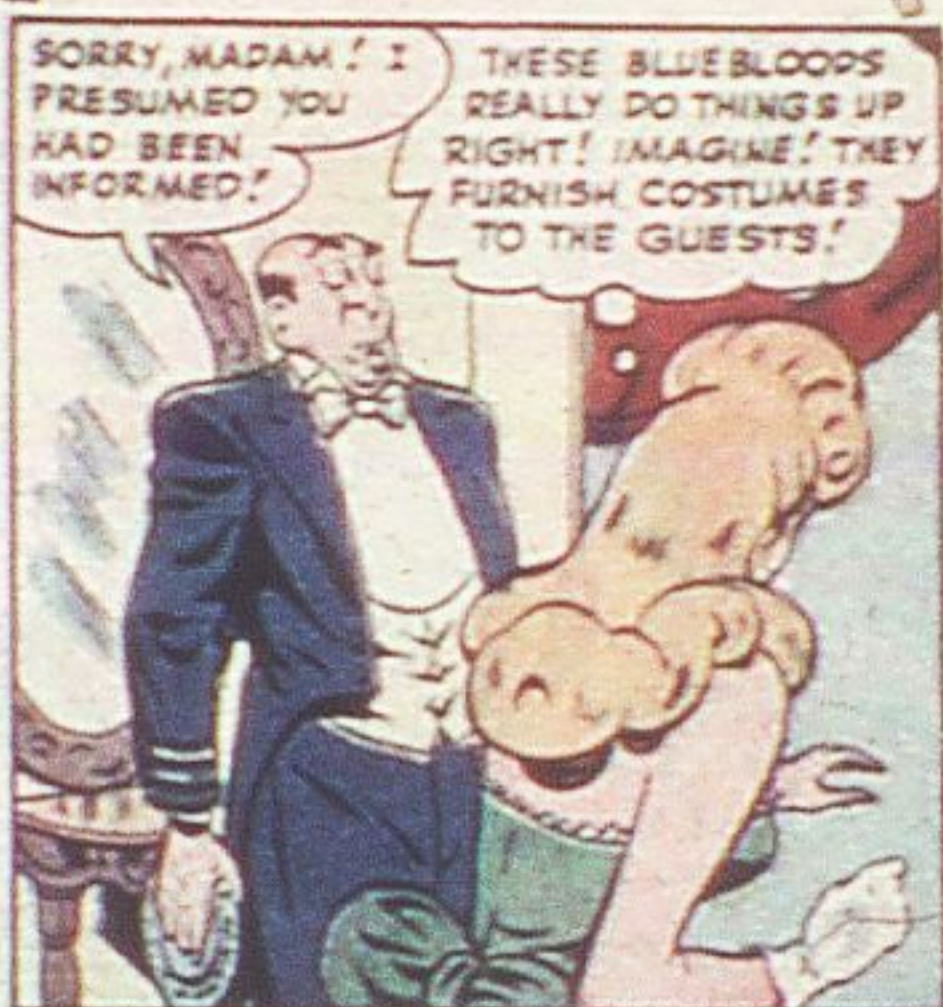
"What's that?" asked Chuck.

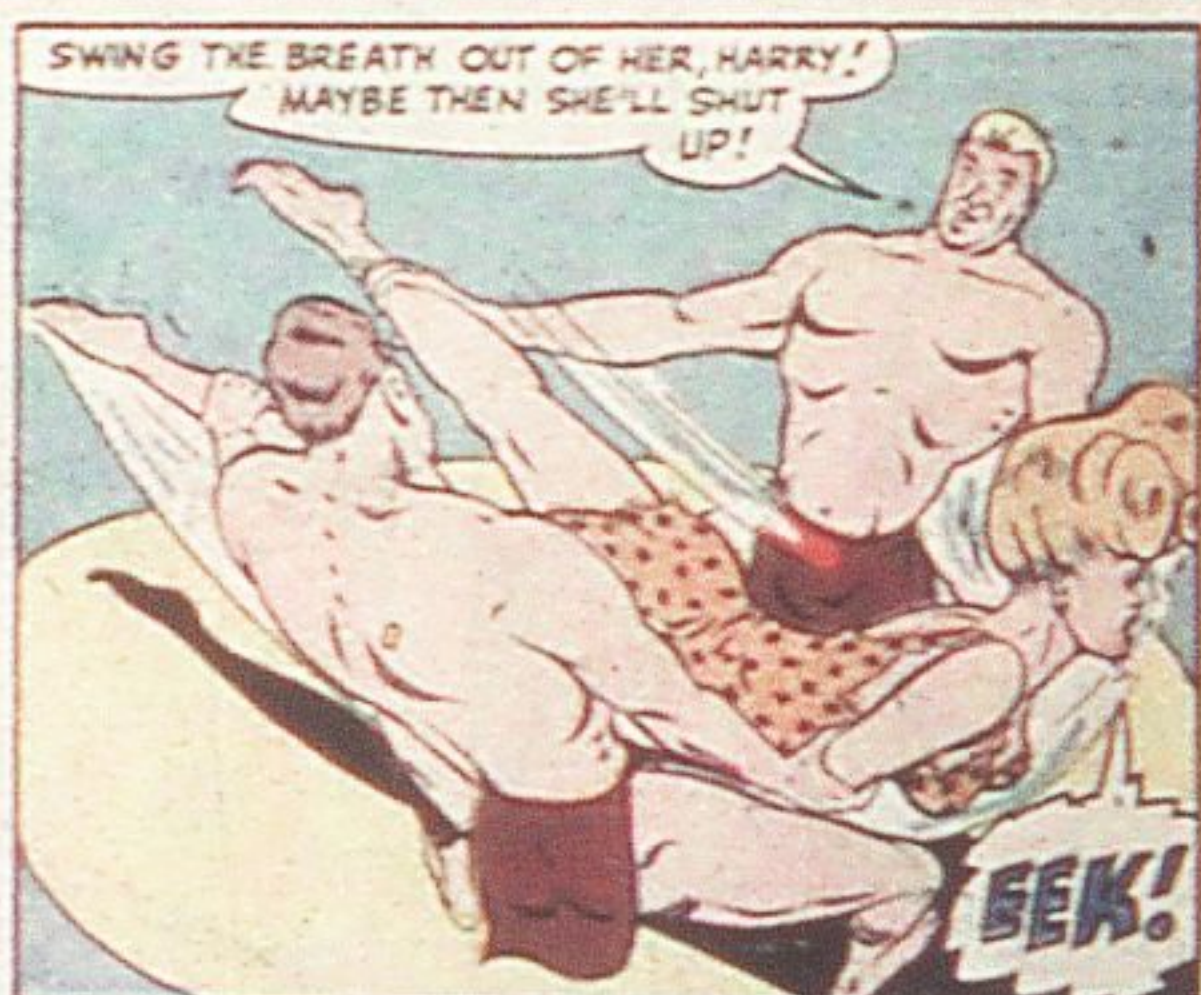
"The knowledge that there's a sense of humor, even in the lowest savages. I think that's good." Blackhawk smiled. "And I found out something else, fellows," he said drily. "These chaps' year is only six months long—no wonder they live a century or two so easily!"








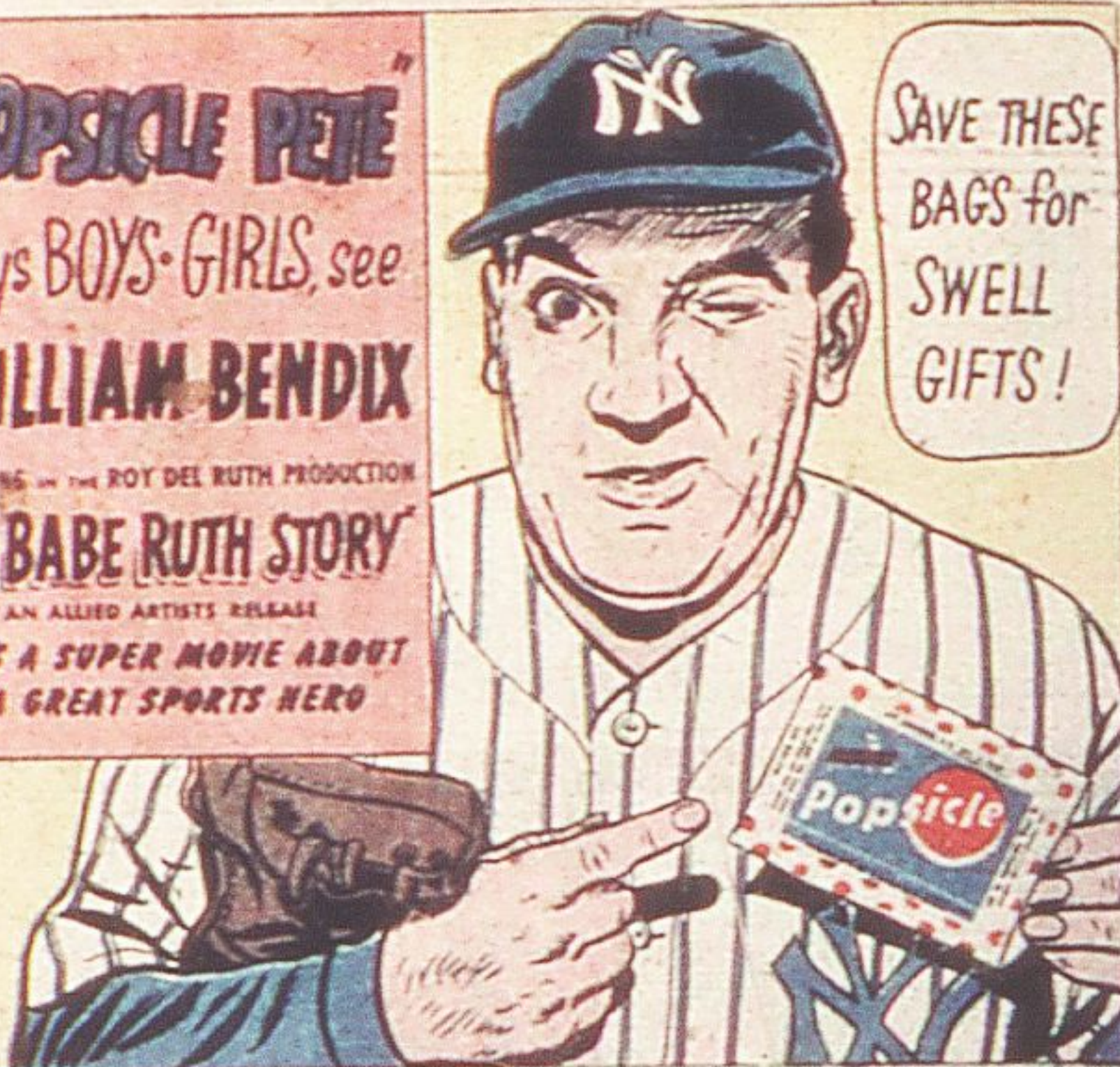








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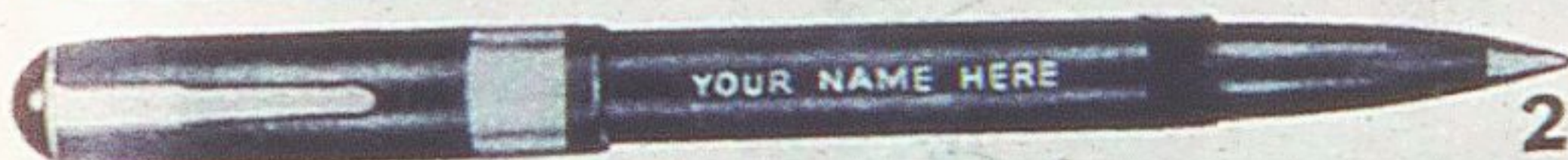
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